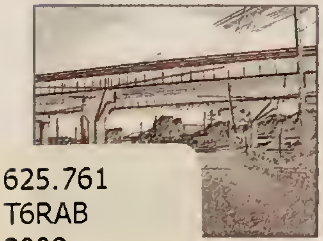
ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
& SECTION 4(F) EVALUATION

April 2009



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FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

for

Project Number: STPP 86-1(30)0

Project Name: Rouse Avenue - Bozeman
Control Number: 4805

in

Gallatin County, Montana

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have determined that the Preferred Alternative, as described in the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) dated July 2008, will have no significant impact on the human environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the July 2008 EA, and information obtained during the public and agency coordination process. After independent evaluation of the EA, MDT and FHWA conclude that the EA adequately and accurately discusses the needs, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project and appropriate mitigation measures. The EA provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required. MDT and FHWA take full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached July 2008 EA.

For purposes of compliance with the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) (ARM 17.4.609(3)(j) and ARM 18.2.239(3)(j)), this FONSI and conclusion that an EIS is not required should be considered part of the EA.

Montana Department of Transportation

5/4/09.
Date

Federal Highway Administration

5/13/09
Date

Project Abstract and Location:

The proposed action is the reconstruction and widening of approximately 1.95 miles of Rouse Avenue/Bridger Drive from Main Street to Story Mill Road, in Bozeman. The proposed project would provide necessary safety and capacity improvements for vehicular and non-motorized travel within the corridor. The Preferred Alternative has two travel lanes, a center turn lane, bike lanes, curb/gutter, and sidewalk, as well as new traffic control at key intersections.

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I - Introduction

This document summarizes the final coordination activities undertaken by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to complete the Rouse Avenue – Bozeman Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA, which is attached as Appendix D, describes the potential social, economic, and environmental effects of reconstructing and widening Rouse Avenue from Main Street to Story Mill Road, in Bozeman.

This document affords MDT and FHWA the opportunity to:

- Present the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for this project;
- Identify the alternative that has been selected for this project;
- Summarize the impacts of the selected alternative and the proposed mitigation;
- Summarize the efforts undertaken to coordinate with the public and agencies;
- Clarify/correct the text of the EA distributed in July 2008; and
- Respond to written and verbal comments received at the August 27, 2008 Public Hearing and those submitted during the comment period from August 4 through September 18, 2008.

II - Selection of the Preferred Alternative

Based on the Rouse Avenue – Bozeman EA (Appendix D) and the public and agency comments and responses (Section VI), MDT and FHWA have selected the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative is described in detail beginning on page 23 of the attached EA.

In summary, the Preferred Alternative includes:

- Three-lane urban section from Main Street to the East Gallatin River crossing northeast of Griffin Drive, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane except where the roadway passes under the Interstate 90 overpass
- Three-lane rural section from the East Gallatin River crossing to Story Mill Road, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane

[Note: Based on public comment during the review period on the EA, MDT will consider extension of the urban section out to Story Mill as the project proceeds, and if monies are available to implement that design.]

- On-street parking on east side of the street between Main and Mendenhall, on both sides of the street between Mendenhall and Lamme, and off-street parking north of Lamme
- Sidewalks on both sides of the roadway from Main to the East Gallatin River crossing, and a shared pedestrian/bicycle path on both sides from the river to Story Mill. As noted above, if the urban section is extended to Story Mill, the sidewalks would be extended in lieu of a shared path.
- Bike lanes on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall to Story Mill Road
- Boulevard from Mendenhall to Griffin Street, except between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek crossing where boulevards are eliminated to avoid impacts to Bozeman Creek
- Side-street improvements at intersections to accommodate turning movements

III – Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Impact	Mitigation
Land Use	
Consistency with Local Plans: The Selected Alternative is consistent with current zoning.	No mitigation necessary.
Parks & Recreation/Section 6(f): No parks, recreational facilities or Section 6(f) lands would be impacted by the Selected Alternative.	No mitigation necessary.
Farmlands	
The Selected Alternative lies entirely within the urban built-up are of Bozeman, and no analysis of farmland impacts was necessary.	No mitigation necessary.
Social Conditions	
The Selected Alternative is expected to have no effect on population growth, demographic composition, or income levels. It is anticipated to improve travel and access.	No mitigation is required.
Right-of-Way/Easements/Relocations	
Acquisition of at least two residences would be required under the Preferred Alternative due to direct conflicts between the proposed construction limits and the existing structures. A number of utilities have been identified within this corridor that may be impacted by the new right-of-way limits.	All lands needed for right-of-way under the proposed action which are private ownership would be acquired in accordance with both the *Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act* of 1970 and the *Uniform Relocation Act Amendments* of 1987. Any utility relocation would be coordinated with the lines' owners, and done prior to this proposed project's construction.
Economic Conditions	
Improvements in this corridor would be expected to have a positive impact on economic conditions in Bozeman.	No mitigation is required.
Environmental Justice	
The proposed right-of-way acquisitions do not appear to be either low-income or minority owned/occupied properties. Due to the limited number of acquisitions and the nature of these homes and businesses, both the No-Build Alternative and the Build Alternatives would not create disproportionately high and/or adverse impacts on the health or environment of minority and/or low-income populations.	No mitigation is required.

Impact	Mitigation
Air Quality	
The Selected Alternative is located in an unclassifiable/attainment area of Montana for air quality under 40 CFR 81.327, as amended. As such, this project is not covered under the EPA's Final Rule of September 15, 1997 on Air Quality Conformity.	No mitigation is required.
Pedestrians and Bicyclists	
The Selected Alternative would improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the corridor from Mendenhall to Story Mill Road through the provision of bike lanes, ADA accessible sidewalks, and/or shared pedestrian/bicycle paths throughout the corridor.	No mitigation is required: however, due to concerns expressed during the comment period on the EA, MDT will consider different surfacing treatments during final design and will work with local bicycle groups regarding maintenance concerns.
Noise	
Traffic noise impacts are anticipated at seven receptors under the No Build Alternative and at 13 receptors under the Preferred Alternative.	Traffic noise abatements measures were considered, including modification of the Preferred Alternative, traffic management measures, construction of noise barriers, and the use of quiet pavements. These mitigation measures are not practical or effective for the Rouse Avenue corridor.
Water Quality	
The East Gallatin River is the discharge body for storm water and is currently on the DEQ's TMDL 303(d) list of impaired or threatened waters. The increase in the total surface area of paved road related to widening and reconstruction will increase the rate and quantity of surface water runoff from the roadway.	Storm water systems design for the Preferred Alternative would use Best Management Practices to treat storm water before it enters the East Gallatin River. Impacts to Bozeman Creek will require further coordination with the appropriate regulating agencies. Permit/authorization conditions will be incorporated into the project design and construction as appropriate.
Wetlands	
There are no wetlands within the project site.	No mitigation required.
Floodplains	
MDT and the City of Bozeman are currently discussing design options for future water conveyance structures that would improve overall hydraulic function to reduce flood risk. The Preferred Alternative would have no detrimental impact on the flood risk for Bozeman Creek.	Existing hydraulic conditions would be maintained or improved throughout the corridor through the installation of new conveyance structures, and a floodplain development permit would be required.

Impact	Mitigation
Waterbodies, Wildlife Resources, and Habitat	
Wildlife Resources The Biological Resources Report identified several avian, mammal, and fish species in the corridor. There would be minimal impact to general wildlife in the area of study due to the proximity and availability of similar habitat type.	Best Management Practices will be used to prevent direct impacts to nesting migratory birds as well as spawning fish, and may include timing restrictions on tree removal between May and August.
Habitat The project corridor is not critical for survival of the species present given the adjacency of other stream and river corridors, and similar habitat type.	No mitigation is required.
Species of Concern No wildlife or plant species of concern exist within the study area.	No mitigation is required.
Noxious Weeds Nine noxious weeds were observed within the project area.	All construction activities will comply with Montana County Weed Control Act and Administrative Rules.
Threatened/Endangered (T/E) Species	
No Threatened, Endangered, or Proposed plant or animal species exist within the study area.	No mitigation is necessary.
Hazardous Wastes	
Several LUST sites were identified with in the study area. There is one active site within the corridor which had a well reading above water quality standards benzene. Construction activities on Oak Street, immediately north of the MDT property, yielded soil samples that contained chromium.	A field engineer will be on-site and observe excavations adjacent to the sites of concern in case any contaminated soils are encountered. Petroleum resistant pipe materials would be utilized in areas where contamination is encountered, as recommended by the Montana DEQ.
Cultural/Archaeological/Historic Resources	
Ten historic sites have been identified within the study area. Sites recommended as NRHP eligible have been avoided wherever possible. Where complete avoidance was not possible, the conceptual design was modified to minimize the potential impacts.	No mitigation is required.
Visual	
Visual impacts in the corridor include a wider roadway and the removal of some mature vegetation parallel to the roadway The proposed project is anticipated to have an overall positive effect on the visual character of the corridor through the construction of landscaped boulevards through the residential portions; however, there will be a notable loss of large tree cover in the immediate vicinity of the existing roadway.	MDT will coordinate with the City of Bozeman's arborist and Bozeman Tree Board to develop potential mitigation strategies for impacts to trees within the corridor.

Impact	Mitigation
Construction Impacts	
Construction activities from the proposed Build Alternatives would cause temporary inconveniences to area residents and businesses. These would occasionally result in longer travel times, detours, temporary closures, and noise and dust due to the use of heavy machinery.	The project's contractor would be subject to all state and local laws to minimize construction noise by having mufflers on all equipment. Dust control would also be implemented by using either water, or another approved dust-suppressant. In general, BMP's would be used to minimize the effect of sedimentation and/or run-off during the roadway construction periods.
Cumulative Impacts	
In addition to ongoing private development and re-development within the study area, there are approximately nine roadway projects within the general area. Based on the fact that Rouse Avenue is in a highly developed corridor and that the proposed project is not anticipated to induce new growth or development, the Selected Alternative is not anticipated to individually or cumulatively, when considered with the other projects, have any substantial cumulative impacts.	No mitigation is required.
Indirect Impacts	
Indirect impacts from the Selected Alternative range from the loss of on-street parking to increased stormwater runoff from the increased pavement width.	Parking and stormwater type issues are addressed through design considerations outlined in the EA.
Other indirect impacts may be those related to a change in land use from improvements to this route. Since the project lies entirely within the city limits, the direction of future growth will be determined more by zoning and permitting by the City of Bozeman than by the widening of Rouse Avenue. Based on this information, the Selected Alternative will not induce significant land use changes or promote unplanned growth. There will be no significant effect on access to adjacent properties or present traffic patterns.	No mitigation is necessary.

IV - NEPA/MEPA Coordination Process

The proposed project fully defined in the attached EA has been coordinated with the appropriate federal, state, and local agencies in compliance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), as well as guidelines provided by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (FHWA Technical Advisory T6640.8A).

Availability of EA for Review and Comment

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the EA for distribution in June/July 2008, and a Notice of Availability was distributed to area newspapers and radio stations as follows:

An individual mailer was also sent out to 104 people/businesses that either attended previous public meetings or expressed an interest in the project.

Copies of the EA were available for public review at the following locations:

- Bozeman Public Library (626 East Main Street),
- Bozeman City Hall (411 East Main Street)
- MSU-Bozeman Renne Library (1 Centennial Mall)
- MDT Bozeman Area Office (907 North Rouse Avenue)
- MDT Helena Headquarters Office (2701 Prospect Ave).

Copies of the EA were also available upon request from MDT and the EA could be viewed on the MDT website at http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml.

The EA was mailed to all agencies contained on the Distribution List on pages 77 and 78 of the EA. The public review and comment period began on August 4, 2008 and ended on September 18, 2008.

Additional copies of the EA were mailed to private individuals upon their request.

Public Hearing

A formal Public Hearing was held to present the Preferred Alternative and take comments on the EA. The Hearing was held on August 27, 2008 at the Bozeman Senior Center. Approximately 90 people attended the Public Hearing. A transcript of the Public Hearing and copy of the sign-in sheets are provided in Appendix B.

Comments Received

Nineteen verbal comments were received at the Hearing, and 49 were submitted in writing during the comment period. Those comments and responses from MDT and FHWA are contained in Appendix A of this FONSI.

Additional Coordination with City of Bozeman

While planning and engineering staff from the City of Bozeman have been involved throughout the project development process, and a copy of the EA was sent to the City, no formal comments were received from City officials. MDT and FHWA offered to make a presentation to the City Commission to provide an update on the status of the Rouse Avenue project and the NEPA/MEPA process before issuing this FONSI.

MDT and consultant staff made a presentation and answered questions from City Commissioners at a regular Commission meeting on January 12, 2009. Two Commissioners expressed concerns about the loss of parking in the corridor, and made suggestions on how the footprint might be reduced to allow for the inclusion of parking on one side of the roadway. MDT and consultant staff offered to discuss these concepts in greater detail with the concerned commissioner at a separate meeting. No further meetings were held and no modifications to the proposed design are anticipated.

V – Edits/Corrections to the EA

Table 3.2 on page 40 of the EA, and Figure 3-3 on page 41 of the EA identified the parcel at 1227/1237 N. Rouse as an acquisition. At the time of the drafting of the EA, this site was under redevelopment but the final agreements on the right-of-way requirements at this site were not completed. The project team has been actively coordinating the design with Montana Avenue Partners, and there are no further property acquisitions required at this site.

Text in Section 3.8 on page 48 of the EA indicated that additional right-of-way would be required, or that the separated path would need to be constructed outside the right-of-way due to existing right-of-way constraints on the south side of Rouse Avenue. This is errant information, and the text should read as follows: "During the development of alternatives, attempts were made to accommodate both a pedestrian trail and separated bike paths along both sides of the route in the rural portion of the corridor. This could not be accomplished without substantial right-of-way acquisition in order to comply with the City's current standards regarding a safe distance of separation between pedestrian and bicycle facilities and another roadway intersection. Construction of the path with adequate separation can be accomplished on the ~~north~~ **south** side of Rouse in the rural portion, but would need to be constructed outside the roadway right-of-way on the ~~south~~ **north** to provide adequate separation. MDT is committed to the inclusion of these facilities on both sides of the roadway, and will continue to work with the City of Bozeman to determine how and when these pedestrian trails are constructed, and who will be responsible for their construction and maintenance."

VI – Response to Comments

The public review and comment period on the Rouse Avenue – Bozeman EA began on August 4, 2008 and ended on September 18, 2008. Forty-nine written comments were received during this period. Each of those comments and a response from the project team is included in Appendix A. The Public Hearing for the EA was held on August 27, 2008, during which 19 verbal comments were recorded. The transcript as well as responses to those comments are contained in Appendix B, along with copies of the sign-in sheets from the Hearing.

Appendix A – Response to Comments

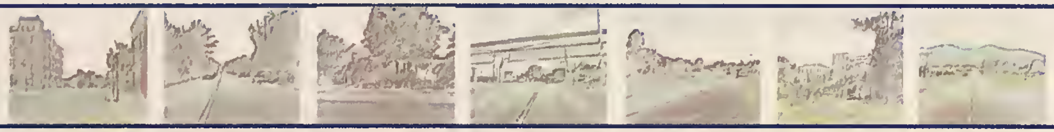
The following pages contain the comments made at the Public Hearing, as well as copies of the comment letters received (on the left side of the page), and the FHWA/MDT response (on the right side of the page). Comment letters are presented in date-order, and each is numbered sequentially. The response to each letter is identified with the number corresponding to the comment. Below is a log of the comments received during the comment period, and the page number where the comment and response can be found in this Section.

Comment Number	Name	Page Number
1	Stuart Jennings	A-3
2	Art & Mary Ann Nielsen	A-8
3	Joe Gilpin	A-9
4	Lisa Ballard	A-10
5	Gail and John Richardson	A-11
6	Peter Foley	A-12
7	Shane Matolyak	A-13
8	George Thompson	A-14
9	Don Jackson	A-15
10	Rachel Rockafellow	A-15
11	Jeffrey Krauss	A-16
12	Debbie Arkel, Bozeman Public Srvcs. Dept.	A-20
13	Mary Ellerd	A-22
14	James D. Foley	A-23
15	Bob Nichol	A-25
16	Anne Trygstad	A-26
17	Scott Benowitz	A-28
18	Susan Ewing	A-29
19	Verna Whiteman	A-29
20	Deborah Goltz	A-30
21	Albert & Victoria Scharen	A-31
22	Hiller W. & Amy D. Higman	A-32
23	Don Jackson	A-34
24	Brian Stoppel	A-35
25	Dustin Workman	A-38
26	Gary Beardslee	A-40
27	Karen Filipovich	A-41
28	Margaret M. Davis	A-43
29	Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board	A-44
30	Charles R. Swart	A-45

31	Krystina Prinzing Ward	A-46
32	Frank Margeau	A-47
33	Florence Groth	A-48
34	Chad A. Groth	A-49
35	Mary Ann Nielsen	A-50
36	Jim Nallick	A-51
37	Brandon Saltz	A-52
38	Mark Miller	A-53
39	Heather Jernberg	A-54
40	Gary Vodehnal	A-55
41	Ben Lloyd	A-56
42	Rob Pertzborn	A-57
43	Carolyn Hopper	A-58
44	Tim Stefan	A-59
45	Deborah McAfee	A-60
46	Robert Banis	A-61
47	Theresia Konrad	A-62
48	Secilia Marino	A-63
49	Coyote, Aspen & Micah Marino	A-64

Verbal testimony was also provided at the Public Hearing and is included in Appendix B. The following individuals provided testimony:

Comment Letter	Name	Transcript Page Number
A	Christopher Spegis	B-12
B	Hiller Higman	B-13
C	Ted Lange	B-13
D	Charles Swart	B-14
E	Andrew Epple	B-15
F	Robert Banis	B-15
G	Peter Rugheimer	B-16
H	Ralph Zimmer	B-16
I	Debra DeBode	B-17
J	Larry Brown	B-17
K	Brian Metsger	B-18
L	Bill Harston	B-18
M	Jena Caplette	B-18
N	Linda Locke	B-19
O	Kathie Callahan	B-19
P	Christopher Spegis	B-19
Q	Krystine Ward	B-20
R	Sharon Nelson	B-20
S	Tara (?)	B-21



The following comments were submitted in writing to MDT during the public comment period on the EA.

Comment 1

Date: August 4, 2008
To: Montana Dept. of Transportation
From: Stuart Jennings
Re: Rouse Avenue EA, July 2008

Thank you for preparing the EA for public consideration. Overall, I very much like the improvements suggested. I have several comments for your consideration:

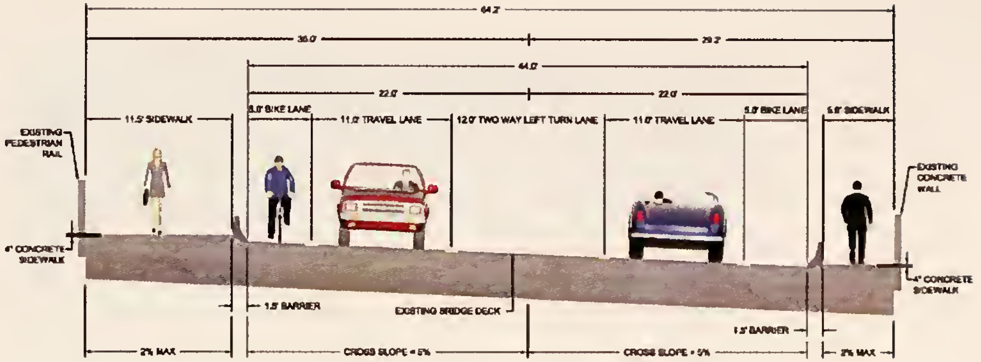
1-A The bridge across the East Gallatin River needs additional thought given to pedestrian/bike use and wildlife. The shared use path on the north side of the river from Story Mill to the East Gallatin crossing sounds good in concept, but no detail is provided of the western termination of this path. The intersection of Griffin and Rouse/Bridger is very pedestrian unfriendly. The north side of the road is very tight. Recent remodel of this intersection shows the lack of thought given to pedestrians. A sidewalk segment was constructed at the intersection and terminated without making a safe connection to any other pedestrian facilities. My concern is that the proposed project may do the same thing by building the shared use path, but not making a safe transition into a connecting bike/ped facility.

1-B The south side of the road has similar problems. For example, the sidewalks from Main Street end at the East Gallatin bridge. The inference in the text is that it will be the developer's responsibility to build these facilities when the trailer court is redeveloped into residential housing. However, the Boys and Girls Club has already been developed and is a critical connection to the sidewalk system. I recommend that you consider continuing the sidewalk on the south side of the road as far as the Boys and Girls Club. If this is left as a gap in the sidewalk system it is highly unlikely that the developer of the trailer park will pay to make this critical connection (see yellow line, Figure 1

Response 1

1-A

Bridge rails will be modified to accommodate pedestrians on both sides of bridge.

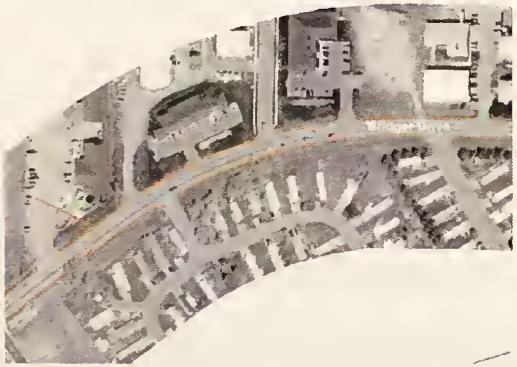


1-B

Funding constraints do not currently allow for a further extension of the urban section to the east. If, however, additional funding becomes available, MDT will consider extension of an urban section to Story Mill Road since it will be within the limits cleared by this EA.

1-C A second improvement to the Griffin/Rouse intersection could be made at the triangular shaped parcel on the NE corner (Fig 1). Again the sidewalk dead-ends into space without any connection. However, in this case I am guessing that the parcel is entirely inside the ROW. There is no developer poised to complete MDTs work. My recommendation is to look at the entire parcel as part of the road job. It might make a nice entryway green space, stormwater treatment pond, etc. rather than being left as an orphaned property given insufficient design attention.	**1-C** MDT can explore the potential to utilize this space for stormwater treatment or other beneficial uses as the design progresses.
1-D Wildlife mitigation should be contemplated for the eastern side of the bridge as this is a common wildlife crossing. Dead deer are not uncommon on the road between the Panda gas station and Boys/Girls club. There are a substantial number of whitetail deer living north of the proposed project and this is a wildlife corridor also for skunks, raccoons, and even occasional bears and mountain lions. Wild turkeys have also been seen a short distance north. The text of the report gives an unrealistically low importance to wildlife crossing. Getting wildlife under, over or around the project would be good for preventing both vehicle damage and wildlife mortality. I've stood hard on my brakes in this location multiple times for wildlife.	**1-D** The EA notes the wildlife use of the study area, but historic data does not suggest a high incidence of wildlife conflicts. There were no reported crashes involving animals in the project area over the period January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2007. MDT roadkill data contained five records (four white tail and one mule deer) over a four-year period, all occurring north of I-90. Due to the low crash history and grade constraints in this urbanized area, a new wildlife crossing structure is not feasible, but it is anticipated that driver visibility of approaching wildlife would be improved through the wider cross section of the overall roadway.

Figure 1 Intersection of Griffin and Bridger Drive shown in the EA.

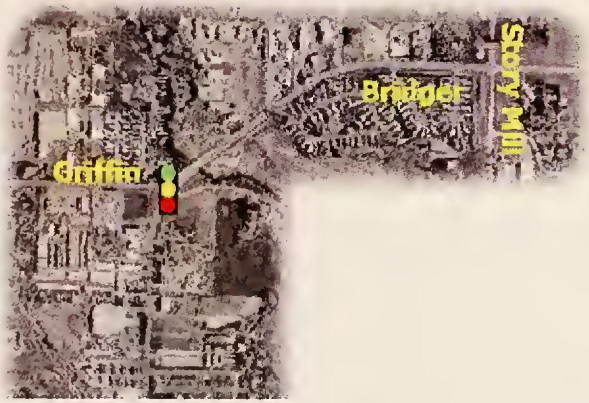


1-E The intersection of Birdie Drive and Bridger Drive is an intersection of a residential street with sidewalks with Bridger Drive, proposed for construction without sidewalks. Clearly the City was thinking about the residential character of the neighborhood to the north with sidewalks when the Bridger Creek Subdivision was laid out. It is unclear how the shared use path would integrate with Birdie Drive, but I am hopeful the sidewalk system would connect to the shared use path.

1-F The intersection of Story Mill and Bridger Drive is a high risk pedestrian crossing. My assumption was that a signal would be installed at this intersection as part of this project, but it appears not to be the case (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Story Mill Intersection

Figure 2-9
Proposed Intersection Traffic Control



This intersection is a critical bike and pedestrian intersection since it is where the Main Street to the Mountains Trail intersects Bridger Canyon (Figure 3). I have crossed Bridger Drive hundreds of times on my bike and I've only had a vehicle stop once despite the clear signing that it is a pedestrian crossing. This intersection is made worse by the fact that the

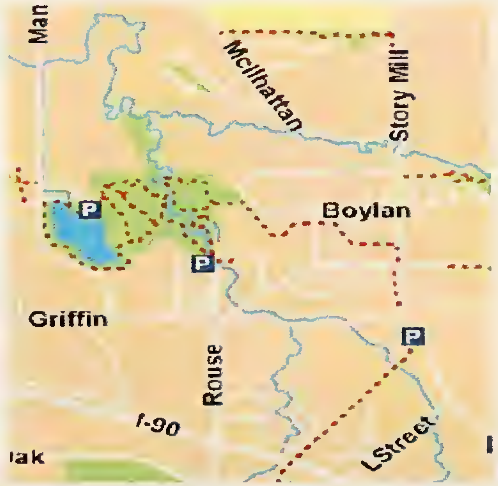
1-E

Depending on location within the corridor, and whether the urban section is extended throughout the corridor, sidewalks or a shared-use path would be constructed along Rouse Avenue and tie into existing side-street sidewalks at the new right-of-way limits. The project would not construct additional connections or facilities beyond the new right-of-way limits.

1-F

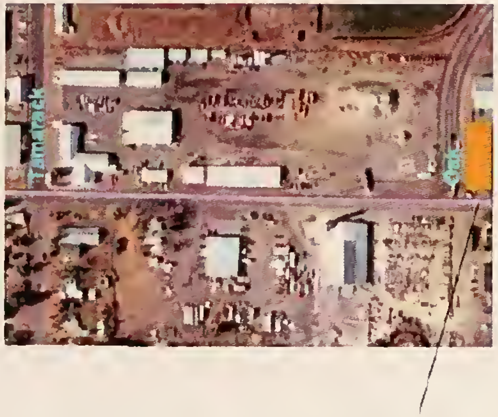
A signal at the Story Mill/Bridger Drive intersection is currently programmed as part of the Story Mill development project; however, the signal will be installed concurrent with whichever project is completed first (the development project or the reconstruction of Rouse Avenue). Depending on the availability of funding for Rouse Avenue, the signal may be installed prior to completion of the speed increases from 35 MPH to 45 MPH a couple of hundred yards east of the intersection so motorists DO NOT want to stop for a pedestrian at a time where they've got their foot on the accelerator. A police car could write tickets all day long at this intersection. That suggests to me that the proposed alternative will have no effect on pedestrian/bike safety at this intersection. Presumably the new bike and ped shared use path will only increase use, thus it is critical to have a safe way across the street. A stoplight is my preferred alternative, especially considering all of the new development underway in the immediate vicinity since the 2005 data collection for the EA. I believe there are an additional 1100 housing units associated with the Story Mill development and several hundred at Legends. In the near future there will be many more cars and the level of service will be undersized. If you don't believe me go watch traffic speeds and the interaction of pedestrians and bikes with cars. The speeds are high and so is the bike/ped hazard. It would be tragic to implement this large project without fixing the existing safety problems. It is my understanding that the number of recent fatalities in Bozeman from fires is zero while 5 pedestrians or bicyclist have been killed by automobiles, not to mention the number of injuries. This is one of those intersections ripe for a fatality. Public safety should be a key consideration at this intersection.

Figure 3 Main Street to the Mountains trail crossing at Story Mill (from gvlt.org)



1-G The proposed acquisition of the property at 1227 N. Rouse must be a mistake (Figure 4). This redevelopment of the old steel yard is likely to be nominated for an award for beautification of an old eyesore. How is it possible this property is indentified for acquisition? It is remarkable especially since it is across the street from the MDT facility and has been under careful reconstruction over the past several years including a redesign of the intersection to accommodate a turn lane.

Figure 4 Property to be acquired?



1227 / 1237 N. Rouse

1-G

At the time of the initial work on the EA, the final agreements on the right-of-way requirements at this site were not completed. MDT has been working with the developer of this site and has acquired the necessary right-of-way for this project. No additional right-of-way or acquisitions would be required from this site.

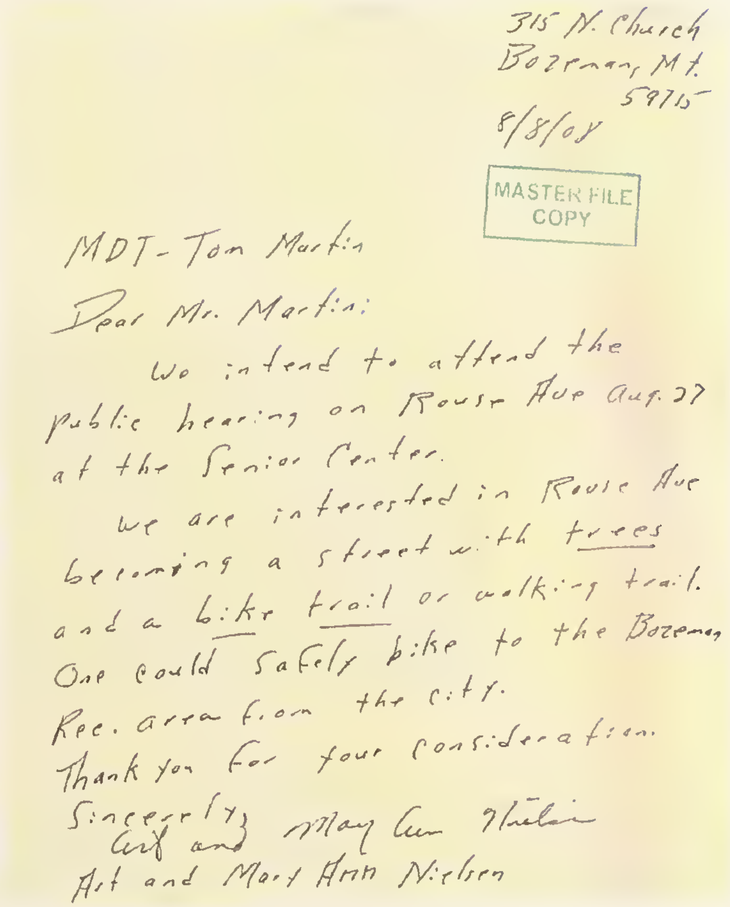
1-H Section 3.13 Waterbodies, Wildlife and Habitat Resources (page 55)—The statement that no deer tracks could be found in the investigation corridor or that no other wildlife sign was found during the investigation caused me to contemplate the adequacy of the investigation. The area around the East Gallatin River bridge crossing is rich with wildlife. I would recommend rechecking these observations with snow on the ground. I live approximately one-half mile northeast of the bridge and routinely observe dozens of whitetail deer in the vicinity, especially in fall and winter.

--end of comments--

1-H

At the time of the biological resource suveys, no deer trails or other wildlife sign, with the exception of some migratory bird species, were observed in the project corridor. Use of the project area, especially the north end, by deer speices, small mammals, migratory birds, and other wildlife species is known and documented in the EA. The project corridor is not critical for survival of the species present given the adjacency of other stream and river corridors, and similar habitat type.

Comment 2



315 N. Church
Bozeman, Mt.
59715

8/8/08

MASTER FILE
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MDT - Tom Martin

Dear Mr. Martin:

We intend to attend the public hearing on Rouse Ave Aug. 27 at the Senior Center.

We are interested in Rouse Ave becoming a street with trees and a bike trail or walking trail. One could safely bike to the Bozeman Rec. area from the city.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Art and Mary Ann Nielsen
Art and Mary Ann Nielsen

Response 2

The proposed project includes a boulevard sidewalk and bike lanes throughout the majority of the Rouse Avenue corridor from West Main Street to Story Mill Road. The boulevard is eliminated between Main and Mendenhall, and between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek corssing due to right-of-way constraints, as well as in any portion to be constructed as a rural section.

Comment 3

Greetings,

3-A I am one of the sub-consultants working on the Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan Update. Specifically, I am working on all aspects of non-motorized transportation within the plan. As part of the project team, and as a Bozeman resident, I would like to express support for the 'Preferred Alternative' outlined within the EA for Rouse Avenue. The Transportation Plan will be recommending continuous bike lanes and sidewalks over the length of the project extents. The Transportation Plan also calls for shared use paths beginning at Griffin Drive and heading to the north along Bridger Drive. We have identified widely recognized issues with shared-use paths in areas with a large amount of driveways or crossings (attached), and would not recommend them in the urban cross sections described in the EA.

3-B I would also like to pass along some verbal feedback I have received following the intersection improvements made to the Griffin Drive and Oak Street along Rouse Avenue. Cyclists are having a difficult time with chip seal policy in urban areas that MDT has been implementing in recent projects within Bozeman. After chip sealing, the loose aggregate collects in the shoulder/bike lane areas of the roadway making them extremely hard to navigate on a bicycle with narrower tires. Even with sweeping, the chip seal surfacing on the shoulder/bike lane does not compact and smooth over time the same way it does in the travel lane leaving an unpleasant rough surface. I would recommend a smooth asphalt surface for Rouse Avenue, or using a much finer aggregate in chip sealing operations followed by a robust sweeping of the shoulders following surfacing.

Thank you for your consideration,

-Joe Gilpin

Response 3

3-A

See response to Comment 1-B.

3-B

MDT will consider different surfacing treatments during final design and will work with local bicycle groups regarding maintenance concerns.

Comment 4	**Response 4**
As MDT considers improvements on Rouse Avenue, Streamline/Galavan, the public transportation provider in Bozeman, **4-A** asks for design consideration of bus stops with connectivity to pedestrian facilities. We currently have a bus stop southbound at Cottonwood and Rouse, and we probably would have another stop if conditions were conducive. With existing services such as the Food Bank and upcoming development at Story Mill and other locations, we foresee increased service in this area of Bozeman (transit funding dependant).	**4-A** The proposed improvements do not preclude the future installation of bus stops in the corridor. Sidewalks would be continuous throughout and provide the requested connectivity for pedestrians.
4-B In the document, I believe it would be helpful to have a section about transit considerations. I see us needing stops at Cottonwood, near the Food Bank, and near the Boys and Girls Club. We also may need stops near Main or Mendenhall, half way between Mendenhall and Cottonwood, near Oak Street and at unknown locations related to the Story Mill development (these locations require more analysis).	**4-B** It would not be appropriate for MDT to identify specific locations of bus stops in this environmental document, but the Department will work with local transit authorities to identify desirable locations during final design.
4-C Please refer to the **draft** “Bus Stop Program Guidance for Planners and Developers” (still under review) attached to assist in this matter. Also, please don’t hesitate to contact Lee Hazelbaker, Streamline Director (587-2434), or myself to help make Rouse Avenue a bus-friendly road.	**4-C** MDT will coordinate with Streamline as the project progresses.

Thank you,

Lisa Ballard, P.E.
Streamline Coordinator
Current Transportation Solutions, Inc.
10 Sweetgrass Ave
Bozeman, MT 59718
p 406.581.4601 f 651.331.4601
lballard@currenttransportation.com

Comment 5

5-A As longtime residents of the Bozeman area just north of town, we use Rouse Ave. quite often to drive into downtown. While we agree that improvements in pedestrian/bicycle paths are needed, we feel that your preferred alternative does not do enough to preserve the area's mature trees. When we read that more than 125 mature trees would be sacrificed ("a notable loss of tree cover"), we were horrified. This should **5-B** be avoided at any cost. Plus, Creekside Park must be maintained as is. There should be no diversion of Bozeman Creek (as into a pipe)!! For example, why not have a bicycle lane on one side and a sidewalk/walking path on the other. These do not need to be on both sides of the street in the residential area between Main and Tamarack that would be severely impacted with regards to mature vegetation. **5-C** Plus, turning lanes in this specific area could be sacrificed as well. We feel strongly that Bozeman has lost too many mature trees due to construction/development already. It would be a disgrace to lose these trees. Replacement trees would take many years to grow; roadside residents would lose much of their mature tree cover. This is simply not acceptable or desirable. We suggest you revise your preferred alternative in order to do as little damage as possible to mature trees. Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Gail and John Richardson
5263 Cimmeron Drive
Bozeman, MT 59715

Response 5

5-A

The City of Bozeman arborist will conduct an inventory of trees in the corridor and MDT will work with individual property owners and consider options to avoid healthy trees where feasible and appropriate.

5-B

There are no impacts to Creekside Park and the alternative including enclosure of Bozeman Creek in a pipe was eliminated due to extraordinary costs and lack of public and agency support.

5-C

City policy indicates that bike lanes and sidewalks must be installed on both sides for safety reasons. The center turn lane is included in this section to provide safe and efficient residential access without inhibiting traffic flow in the through lanes.

	Comment 6	Response 6
	I have several questions/ comments:	
6-A	1) Is there a projected start date? When? How long will it take for that portion between Main Street and Peach Street?and When would any takings (if necessary) be taking place?	**6-A** Construction of the project would not begin until 2012 at the earliest. Final design could begin as soon as the FONSI is approved, and Right-of-way negotiations would begin immediately following. It is currently assumed that right-of-way negotiations would take place in late 2010 into 2011.
6-B	2) How intrusive will the construction project be for local traffic? I own a fourplex apartment building in between Lamme and Peach, there is no alley access along this corridor. Will there be reasonably easy access for my tenants? How long will said project take?	**6-B** MDT is committed to maintaining reasonable access to residents and businesses throughout construction. Construction would likely take at least two seasons depending on construction sequencing and available funding.
6-C	3) In terms of distance from building to edge of project, are we talking to actual building or to the front doorsteps? The only access to the second floor apartments is up the stairs from the front of the building.	**6-C** The distances represented in the EA are approximate and base on preliminary design. Final right-of-way requirements will be identified during the final design and right-of-way negotiations.
6-D	4) Where will North Rouse traffic be diverted during the project?	**6-D** Detours, construction phasing and sequencing have not yet been identified, but will be coordinated during final design.
6-E	5) We will be loosing a number of trees. Besides compensation will there be replacement vegetation since the portion of the road will not be a “boulevard”.	**6-E** Compensation for property acquisition and loss of vegetation will occur during right-of-way negotiations.
6-F	6) Will the location of the Bozeman Creek be moved at all? Will there be a new bridge over the Creek where it crosses from one side of the road to the other?	**6-F** There will be no relocation of Bozeman Creek. The existing structure would be replaced with a structure with appropriate hydraulic capacity.
	Thanks you, Peter Foley 582-0687	

Comment 7

I have reviewed the Rouse Ave. EA and am in support of the Preferred Alternative.

I regularly bicycle to work, year-round, using the portion of Rouse from Oak St. to Birdie Lane. During the summer months I often see 1 to 4 other riders who appear to be commuting along this segment as well as other riders using Rouse to access the recreational riding opportunities provided by Bridger Canyon. As noted in the EA, this portion of Rouse is currently poorly suited for bicycle travel due to the lack of a paved shoulder and the off-camber/sloping and often muddy condition of the non-paved shoulder. In the winter months, bicyclists are forced farther into the vehicular travel lanes due to accumulated snow and debris in the shoulder and along the edge of the pavement.

I believe it is important to construct bicycle lanes along Rouse to provide for safe travel opportunities for the growing number of bicyclists that can be expected to use this route into town (e.g. children and adults from the developments north Griffin Ave and the soon to be developed Story Mill Project).

Shane Matolyak

Response 7

Thank you for your comment. As noted in the EA, the proposed project includes bicycle lanes for the project length from Main Street to Story Mill.

Comment 8

The Rouse street road work needs to include adequately sized bike lanes. Rouse is used as a north side Bozeman bike route, and is the only road providing direct access to the Bridger canyon bike routes. The road services the fairgrounds and variety of business and athletic facilities located along Rouse.

The expansion of the bike lanes on Rouse would then feed into the Oak Street and Griffin Street bike routes, also there is the Boys and Girls Club needing accessible and safe bike transportation along Rouse.

North 7th and North 19th do not have appropriate bike lanes, and consequently there is no incentive for bicyclists to ride to business located on those streets.

Thank you.
George Thompson

note revised e-mail address : george.thompson@montana.edu
George Thompson, AIA
Project Manager, Architect
Facilities Planning, Design, Construction
Plew Building.
Montana State University
Bozeman, Mt 59717
desk-406-994-5265, cell 406-581-6000
george.thompson@montana.edu
LEED-Accredited Professional

Response 8

Thank you for your comment. As noted in the EA, the proposed project includes bicycle lanes for the project length from Main Street to Story Mill.

Comment 9

I am totally supportive of the preferred alternative.
I live on Story Mill Road and travel Rouse Ave daily by both car and bike.
It is particularly important to me that bike lanes be provided to allow a safe and energy efficient mode of transportation.
Sincerely,
Don Jackson
1280 Story Mill RoAD
bOZEMAN mt 59715

Response 9

Thank you for your comment.
See response to Comment 8, above.

Comment 10

Thank you for your work on improving this heavily used roadway in Bozeman. As an avid bicyclist, thank you for addressing bicycle and pedestrian access on this road. Please be sure pedestrian and
bicycle usage is included in the final decision for improvements.
Sincerely,

Rachel Rockafellow,
1202 S. Spruce Dr.
Bozeman 59715

Response 10

Thank you for your comment, see response to Comment 2.

Comment 11

August 27, 2008

To MDOT, the Bozeman Area TCC, and others interested.

We've been invited to comment on MDOT's "alternatives" and "preferred alternative" for Rouse. I didn't think any of them were very good.

Attached is a spreadsheet showing my "suggested" alternative. Note that the increased right of way south of Tamarack is due to sidewalks and bike lanes and tree width boulevards.

Also note that my alternative keeps parking, at 8', on the east side of Rouse from Lamme to Tamarack, although there would be no parking probably 50 to 60 feet back from each of the three intersections shown.

I could've described the highway from Lamme out to Story Mill, the way I first designed it, but it is described here from Story Mill inwards.

11-A **From the section Story Mill *south* to the Interstate underpass, the highway should be a urban route, with all urban amenities** including sidewalks and bike lanes and boulevards on both sides of the roadway. There is plenty of Right Of Way. Bicyclists will not want a bike ped path as they will not want to stop at every driveway and cross street; they will want to be "vehicles like any other". Pedestrians **11-B** will want sidewalks to connect to the M trail and legends trails on the north and the Boys and Girls club on the south. There should be a planted median with turn lane cuts and street trees in the boulevards.

11-C Rouse, or Montana Highway 86, is a principal arterial and the main north south arterial in the eastern part of the city. It is not now, nor has it ever been a local street. The problems with improving the road are mainly due to right of way from Tamarack to Lamme.

Response 11

11-A See response to Comment 1-B regarding consideration of extension of the urban section.

11-B See response to Comment 1-B with regard to the urban section. Bicyclists would be able to use the dedicated bike lane provided along Rouse Avenue, and pedestrians can use either the sidewalk or the shared path as appropriate. There are no current plans for a planed median, but the boulevards are planned to have some landscaping treatment in coordination with the City.

11-C Comment noted.

11-D The current roadway works only for cars, not people, not pedestrians, not bike riders, not buses. The 2001 Transportation plan and the 2020 plan all require collectors and arterials to have multi modal infrastructure improvements. The current conditions are unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists and are out of compliance with the 2020 plan and past and current Transportation plans that have had full vetting in the public process. These improvements have been planned since the 2001 plan was adopted.

11-E **For the section starting at Tamarack *south* to Peach,** the attached road section shows tree size (5') boulevards on both sides of the roadway, to replace trees cut down, an 8' parking lane on the east side, bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides and minimum width travel lanes, ***with no middle turn lane.***

11-F **For the section starting Peach *south* to Lamme,** the road section shows one tree size boulevard (4') on the west side of the roadway, to replace trees cut down, an 8' parking lane on the east side, bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides and minimum width travel lanes, ***with no middle turn lane.***

11-G **There may be a need for a pedestrian bridge over the creek on the west side.**

11-H **At the intersections of Tamarack, Peach and Lamme,** there is no parking, small boulevards for snow loading and pedestrian safety, sidewalks, bike lanes and 11' driving lanes with a 12' turn lane. Pedestrian crossings need to be well defined particularly at Lamme. I believe these are minimums for pedestrian and bicycle safety as well as continued functioning for a roadway.

11-D The proposed improvements are consistent with the 2001 Transportation Plan and provide multimodal transportation improvements.

11-E The minimum boulevard width is five feet. The City has requested boulevards for trees, pedestrian safety, and snow storage. The City of Bozeman standard width for a new arterial street is wider, but in an effort to minimize impacts they have agreed to use five-foot boulevards for the Rouse Avenue corridor.

Median treatments for roadways represent one of the most effective means to regulate access, but are also the most controversial. The safety benefits of median improvements have been the subject of numerous studies and syntheses. Studies of both particular corridors and comparative research on different types of median treatments indicate the significant safety benefits from access management techniques. A study of corridors in several cities in Iowa found that two-way left-turn lanes reduced crashes by as much as 70 percent, improved level of service by one full grade in some areas, and increased lane capacity by as much as 36 percent. [Iowa Department of Transportation, 1997, Access Management Research and Awareness Program: Phase II Report.]

Even if the middle turn lane were eliminated, much of the corridor would essentially be three lanes wide due to the need for turn lanes at several intersections. See graphic on the last page of this letter.

11-F See above discussion on middle turn lanes.

11-G The proposed bridge structure will accommodate sidewalks on both sides of Rouse Avenue over Bozeman Creek.

11-H The intersections will be designed to accommodate the projected traffic demands and may include more lanes for turning movements than the comment would suggest.

11-I The entire highway is a principle arterial which serves the city shops and the new city hall, as well as the Boys and Girls Club at the north end and the Hawthorne elementary school at the south end. Safe pedestrian and bicycle routes are a must. However, it also serves significant large truck traffic and will continue to do so. I do not accept moving bicycles to "other streets" like Church, any more than I support moving big trucks to Wallace. This highway, arterial, is the main north south transportation route in eastern Bozeman.

11-J Finally, a word about lighting. The city has a dark skies
ordinance. Intersections should be well lighted, but any additional
lights must be full cutoff and no trespass east/west in the section
Tamarack to Lamme. Also, there needs to be full public review
11-K of any lighting plan and I think we must avoid the picket fence of
lights such as was installed on south 19th.

11-L The speed limit should be 25 Main to Bond with 15 around Hawthorne school.

I apologize that I couldn't be there, my family required me and we had plans for many weeks for this night.

Jeffrey Krauss

599-5836
508 Park Place
Bozeman

11-I The proposed improvements are intended to provide multimodal improvements within the Rouse Avenue corridor as the principle arterial in this part of the city.

11-J Lighting installed as part of this project would be in compliance with the dark skies ordinance. The only additional lighting proposed along Rouse Avenue with this project would be at the newly signalized intersections of Mendenhall, Peach, Tamarack, Oak, and Griffin. All overhead street lighting would include cutoff lenses to address light pollution (or spillover) onto adjacent parcels.

11-K MDT will work with the City to develop a lighting plan which will be subject to the same public scrutiny typically afforded for such a plan under the dark skies ordinance.

11-L Speed limits are established by the Transportation Commission. They will take recommendations based on a speed study at the request of the local jurisdiction. If through this EA process, the City of Bozeman requests a speed study for the vicinity around Hawthorne School, MDT will conduct the study and make a recommendation for any adjustments in the posted speed limit based on the observed travel behaviors of 85 percent of the travelers.

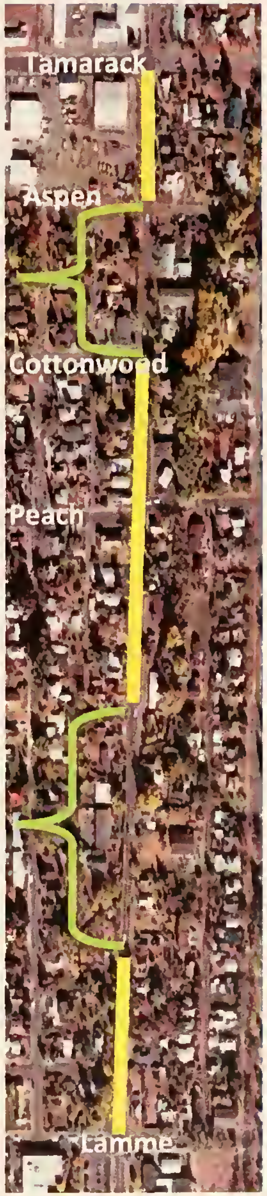
This graphic illustrates the limits of the turn lanes and tapers required to improve intersection level of service. As illustrated, the majority of the residential portion of Rouse Avenue within the project limits would be three lanes, with or without the inclusion of a dedicated center turn lane.

(Attachment to Jeffrey Krauss letter).

Krauss' "Suggested Alternative"

Rouse avenue remodel:	Sidewalks	Boulevards	Curbs	East Park	West Park	bike lanes	travel lanes	median & turn lane	Total ROW
Intersections:									
Three lane (turn lanes)									
Lamme	10	6*	4	0	0	10	22	12	64
Peach	10	6*	4	0	0	10	22	12	64
South of Tamarack	10	6*	4	0	0	10	22	12	64
North of Tamarack	10	10	4	0		10	24	12	70
Road profiles:									
Lamme to Peach	10	4	4	8	0	10	22	0	58
Peach to Tamarack	10	10	4	8	0	10	22	0	64
Tamarack to UnderPass	12	12	4	8	0	10	24	0	70
Underpass	12	9	4	0	0	10	24	0	59
north of UP > story mill	12	12	4	0	0	10	24	12	74

lamme to peach 4' boulevard west side only
east side parking Tamarack to Oak in this stretch
* 2' East, 4' west (all the way Tamarack south to Lamme)



Northbound left turn lane to Tamarack

Approximately 280' with no turn lane

Southbound left turn lane to Peach

Northbound left turn lane to Peach

Approximately 620' with no turn lane

Southbound left turn lane to Lamme

Comment 12		Response 12
Following are comments submitted on the Rouse Avenue E.A. from the City of Bozeman Public Services (Works) Department. The Bozeman City Commission has not taken any formal action regarding commenting on the E.A., so these are only our Department's views.		
12-A The Preferred Alternative proposes a 3-lane rural section from the River crossing to Story Mill Road. This section of street is within Bozeman City limits and is an urban area. We would prefer this arterial be developed as an urban section, complete with curb and gutter and sidewalk. The properties that have recently developed northeast of Story Mill Road have developed with curb and gutter and it makes sense that the street leading up to those improvements continue at an urban standard.	12-A	As noted in response to Comment 1-B, funding constraints do not currently allow for a further extension of the urban section to the east. Based on public comment, and the strong preference stated by City Staff, MDT will consider extension of an urban section to Story Mill Road since it will be within the limits cleared under the EA. MDT will work with the City of Bozeman if the project proceeds through final design, and collectively determine whether an urban section would better suit the on-the-ground conditions and is within cost constraints nearer the time of actual implementation.
12-B The E.A. refers to a 10 foot separated path on the south side of the street from the River crossing to Story Mill, that will be "developed by others". The City has reviewed and preliminarily approved a new development on the south side of Rouse Avenue, but the developer was not conditioned to provide the pathway because this MDT project was being planned, and it was assumed those improvements would be completed with this project. Thus, there are no "others" to do this path.	12-B	The approval states, "The planned pedestrian/bicycle facility along Bridger Drive will be provided either by the state during rebuilding of Rouse/Bridger or during Phase 5, whichever comes first." (pgs. 34-35, *The Story Mill Neighborhood Planned Unit Development Findings of Fact and Order #Z-07159*) As such, if the MDT roadway project precedes the Story Mill development project, MDT will construct the trail (or curb-and-gutter if within cost constraints). If the Story Mill project moves forward before the roadway improvements, the developers will construct the trail on the south side and MDT will construct the trail on the north side.
12-C The E.A. proposes a separated pathway on the north side only in this section. The 2001 Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan does not support separated pathways on only one side of a facility (6.5, para. 3), nor do our City Engineer and I. There is ample literature showing this is not safe. Rather than installing a shared use pathway on the north, we suggest a 6- to 8-foot concrete sidewalk be installed instead.	12-C	The intent, as stated in the EA, was to include separated pathways on both sides, but allow for staged construction as the adjacent parcels developed. Further refinement of the preliminary design provides adequate space for construction of the trail on the south. Construction of the trail would occur as outlined above in 12-B.

12-D We disagree with the proposal to eliminate all on-street parking north of Lamme Street. The 2001 Transportation Plan does indicate no parking should be permitted on arterial streets, but in this instance, parking should be considered in the residential section from Lamme Street north to Tamarack. The section from Lamme to Peach is zoned and developed entirely residential. Most properties have no alley access and many have no driveways. Removing parking from the street and replacing it with parking lots, which would be difficult in many conditions (snow, ice, below zero, extreme heat) for the elderly, infirm and those with young children), is of serious concern to us. Consideration should be given to eliminating the center turn lane in this section as there are no cross streets between Lamme and Peach, and adding parking.

12-D Approximately 22 homes would lose on-street parking. Only two (2) of those homes would have no alley access and no ability to accommodate parking on the existing lot. MDT will negotiate with each individual landowner during the right-of-way negotiation process to identify reasonable compensation for the loss of property value attributable to the lost parking.

Elimination of the center turn lane is not prudent due to the existence of over 35 access points in this area. See response to Comment 11-E, above.

12-E One other comment just for thought – you could pick up a few feet in the first block (Rouse to Mendenhall) by reducing the width of the existing sidewalk. Arterial sidewalks are only required to be 6-feet wide, and these walks are 10-feet wide, which appears to be the area that was left between the street surface and property line.

12-E This recommendation is in conflict with the request of the local property/business owner who is concerned about impacts to the operation of his business. (See response to Comment 24).

Debbie Arkell
Director of Public Services
City of Bozeman, Montana
(406) 582-2315
darkell@bozeman.net

Comment 13

13-A

13-B

13-C

Response 13

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13-A Rouse Avenue is a state primary route. North 7th is an urban principal arterial south of I-90 and an urban minor arterial north of I-90. Griffin is an urban minor arterial, and Oak is an urban collector. The Montana Department of Transportation cannot defer the responsibility to address the transportation issue in this portion of the community by suggesting local routes be improved instead of the state routes.

13-B Improvements in the North 7th and Griffin corridors would not leave funding available to provide the needed pedestrian and bicycle facilities as outlined in local planning documents and as supported by the public through this process.

13-C Grade separation (overpass or underpass) of the railroad would be prohibitively expensive compared to the proposed project, and would involve much more substantive right-of-way in that portion of the corridor.

Comment 14

14-A I own property at 424 N. rouse which is located between Lamme and Peach Street at a point where Bozeman Creek crosses under N. Rouse. As I review the Environmental Assessment, the portion between Lamme and Peach Streets is the most sensitive portion of the plans to expand the road as a result of the Creek and the number of houses with minimal frontage on small lots with many having no parking except for on-street parking. **14-B** It seems to me that your plan of eliminating on-street parking will have a drastic impact on those living on that portion of the road. I do not believe condemning some of the houses to provide for community parking lots is practical alternative to mitigating the affect of the elimination of the on-street parking now available..

14-C My question is why is a two way turn lane required for this portion of N. Rouse. There are no cross streets between Lamme and Peach and the only use of the turn lanes will be to provide access to those homes who have driveways. I am guessing that only half of the homes on that portion of the road have individual **14-D** driveways but I am sure you have the actual count. By eliminating the middle turn lane, on site parking could be maintained and the condemnation costs associated with the devaluation of property resulting in the loss of parking would be substantially lower.

Assuming you were to eliminate the middle turn lane as you approach the two crossroads (Lamme and Peach) (100 feet?) you could then widen the road to provide for the middle turn lane to and at that point eliminate the on street parking. Since you are already planning on condemning two houses at the Peach intersection this plan would have less impact on those living close to the two intersections.

I would think that since the need for the middle turn lane is minimal for this portion of the road and the need for on-street parking is vital for those living on Rouse that the equities would favor the approach outlined above.

Response 14

14-A See response to Comment 12-D.

14-B The EA did not propose to condemn properties to provide for parking. The EA suggested that there may be homes that, during right-of-way negotiations with individual property owners, may be purchased.

14-C See response to Comment 12-D.

14-D Elimination of the center turn lane would provide only enough room for on-street parking on one side.

It appears that in reading the Environmental Assessment that your department has a certain amount of flexibility in your final plan based on your adding the boulevard for Hawthorne School which I feel is appropriate.

I would appreciate it if you would give the above proposal some consideration. It seems that the equities would favor keeping the on-street parking for the residents of Rouse and eliminating the turn lane which for the most part is not needed until you near the two intersections.

Thank You.

James D. Foley
Spokes Foley PLC
239 South Union Street
PO Box 986
Burlington VT 05402
Telephone 802-862-6451
Fax 802-863-2859

Comment 15

Bob Nichol
1615 S. Black #108
Bozeman MT 59715
<nicholbock@bresnan.net>

RECEIVE
SEP 0 8 20
ENVIRONM

TER FIL

Tom Martin
MDT
P.O. Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Mr. Martin:

I was interested to learn of the MDT plans for the "improvement" of North Rouse in Bozeman. It is a "residential" neighborhood (quite apart from whatever the existing zoning might be), and, after the rapidly disappearing trailer courts in the region, the last low income residential community in Bozeman. Were North Rouse more economically upscale I have no doubt that MDT would find alternative options to solve the traffic problems identified in the Bozeman Transportation Plan.

The MDT proposals expand the "sacrifice" designation that the Bozeman City Commission has applied to the Northeast Neighborhood. I suspect that the impact of the plans, if they proceed, will provide rich legal avenues for the impacted residents to pursue. Be advised that they will have many allies in the larger Bozemen community.

Sincerely yours,

Bob Nichol

Bob Nichol

Response 15

According to MLS listings for Bozeman as of October 2008, there were 16 homes listed in the Bozeman area, and 80 in the greater Bozeman area in the same price range as those impacted within the Rouse Avenue corridor.

See also Section 3.6 "Environmental Justice" in the EA regarding the review of impacts from this proposed project on low income residents.

Comment 16

Anne Trygstad
7890 Bridger Canyon
Bozeman, Montana 59715
September 7, 2008

MASTER FILE
COPY

Montana Department of Transportation:

Please read Marjorie Smith's comments regarding North Rouse in Bozeman. They are enclosed.

In addition, I would like to ask: Why are you routing all the traffic onto Main Street? Drivers headed for 15th, 19th, Yellowstone Park or anywhere but Main Street should go around to North 7th and on/from there. You are creating a traffic mess by sending so much traffic down North Rouse.

Sincerely yours,

Anne Trygstad

Response 16

Rouse Avenue is a principal arterial and intended to carry local as well as regional traffic. The proposed improvements merely improve traffic flow on an already congested roadway providing local residential and commercial access, as well as regional travel to and from downtown Bozeman and Bridger Canyon. There is no intent to encourage or induce additional traffic to travel down North Rouse to Main Street.

(Attachment to Anne Trygstad letter)

Bozeman issues that need attention, too

With the major political conventions adjourned, it's tempting to focus on national politics — and important to do so.

But there are local issues that also require our attention, and we need to take action on them during the same period in which we'll be making our voting decisions. These are transportation proposals that will affect the day-to-day lives of many of us.

First there is the Montana Transportation Department's plan for "improvements" to North Rouse ("improvements" is probably not the word some neighborhood residents would choose).

Then there is the update of the Greater Bozeman Transportation Plan.

The MDT and its contract planners have evolved impressively since they first unveiled their grandiose dreams to aghast residents at a meeting of NENA (Northeast Neighborhood Association) in May 2006.

Two years ago MDT imagined a North Rouse that resembled Main Street/Huffine Lane — five traffic lanes, sidewalks, parking lanes — a huge swath of pavement. To make room for it, they would have had to tear down the Bozeman Hotel.

This year they returned with plans for three minimum-width lanes of traffic and a new emphasis on bike lanes and pedestrians. They no longer call for covering up Bozeman Creek where it edges the road. Only two houses are slated for demolition (at the Rouse-Peach intersection) although many others will be affected with sidewalks bumping up against their walls. They'd eliminate on-street parking for several blocks and provide neighborhood parking lots at random places — wherever people let the MDT buy them out.

MARJORIE SMITH

Chronicle columnist

They also plan boulevard strips between the roadway and the sidewalks — not because grass is attractive but because they need a place to pile salty snowplow residue.

They promise they'll buy affected properties at market rates. But what happens to the market value of a property that's slated to lose its front yard to pavement? One man discovered he's doomed to a sort of homeowner's purgatory. There's no point in improving a building tagged for demolition yet no one would buy it now. But the planners don't expect the project to begin for at least four years.

* Then there are the trees. The planners estimate about 125 will be sacrificed — some of them among the largest trees in town — shading some of the smallest houses. Those trees and the creek make Rouse an appealing neighborhood street.

You can see where the highway planners are coming from. It's their job to keep people moving — and they still think of motor vehicles as the main mover. The bicyclists and pedestrians have a place in their plans but their justification for the huge project is to keep cars moving quickly. Highway planners hate bottlenecks — and yet the MDT planners resolutely ignore the one true bottleneck: the railroad crossing.

* What if — instead of destroying homes and trees — the MDT left North Rouse alone and rerouted State Highway 86? What if it continued directly west from Bridger Canyon Road on Griffin to North Seventh? Build a railroad overpass or underpass on Griffin where there's a lot more space to acquire right-of-way. Give all those rushing folks from Bridger Canyon and the new subdivisions around Story Mill Road the choice of a quick, efficient way to a major arterial (and the nearby interstate ramps). Folks who live in Bozeman because they like its slower pace could continue to meander down Rouse and take their chances on getting stuck at the train crossing.

Which brings us to the Greater Bozeman Transportation Plan. At the discussion I attended, the proposed Oak-Highland link was a major bone of contention. Some oppose it because it will damage Bozeman's best wetlands (although some of us can't help chuckling at the idea of an elevated roadway swooping past the penthouses in the Village Downtown). Others believe it's so expensive it will never be built, yet other solutions to traffic pressure in northeast Bozeman will not be considered. Finally, many object to the expense of building a bypass that would run right beside another bypass that's already paid for — Interstate 90.

One planner cautioned us obstreperous NENA folk: "Remember, the Oak-Highland link doesn't just affect you. People to the west of you need a route to the hospital with as few traffic lights as possible."

Well, duh! Everybody west of North Seventh already has a stoplight-free route to the hospital. It's called Interstate 90.

Comments on the environmental impact of the North Rouse plan are due Sept. 18 and may be submitted by mail to Tom Martin, MDT, P.O. Box 201001, Helena, 59620; or online at http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml.

Information on the Bozeman transportation plan is available at http://www.rpa-hln.com/bozeman/bozemantransplan.htm.

Remember — they want to know what we think.

Marjorie Smith is a Bozeman writer and editor and former member of the U.S. Foreign Service. She can be reached at ***yokoi@mcn.net.***

9/5

Comment 17

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Rouse Ave EA.

17-A I believe the EA is deficient in that no alternative was considered that just addresses upgrading the intersections so they at least meet a C LOS, plus adding pedestrian & bike lanes. The need for center turn lanes the entire length of Rouse is overkill, which will negatively effect the character of the street corridor.

17-B By improving only the intersections and adding a bike lane/pedestrian lane, I think the LOS will be sufficient for the planning period. It will cost less to implement and will not require as much ROW as the preferred alternative.

17-C If you cannot/will not add this additional alternative to the EA, then I support the no action alternative.

Scott Benowitz
4691 Shandalyn Lane
Bozeman, MT 59718
406/585-7101

Response 17

17-A Intersection modifications alone would not provide sufficient improvements in overall corridor operations. The center turn lanes are included to provide substantial safety and operational benefits by segregating the turning vehicles from the through traffic in the corridor. See also response to Comment 11-E.

17-B There are numerous driveways and access points onto Rouse Avenue between the intersections that benefit from the two-way left turn lane. Without the two-way left turn lane, the level of service would degrade and the probability of accidents would increase. (See also response to Comment 11-E above.)

17-C Comment noted regarding the preference for the no action alternative.

Comment 18

The idea of rerouting Highway 86 -- continuing it west from Bridger Canyon road onto Griffin and N. Seventh -- seems very worthwhile to investigate.

The proposed revisions of North Rouse would totally destroy the neighborhood feel of that street and remove yet more semi-affordable housing from the rolls. To say nothing of the personal impact on the people living on that street. And the trees.

Thank you, Susan Ewing

Response 18

See response to Comment 13-A and 13-B with regard to re-routing traffic off of Rouse Avenue.

See response to Comment 15 regarding affordable housing concerns.

Comment 19

Hello Mr. James and all other personnel regarding the Rouse Ave EA,

My comments as specific to Section 3 of the Preferred Alternative: Having lived in Bozeman all of my life and at the Rouse & Lamme location multiple times during that time, I would not normally like the idea of decreasing park and natural areas. However, since I live right across from the park and open creek area; I can say that the number of people that will DAILY be impacted by taking all of the needed land access from the east side of the portion of the road, will be many many more than the very few people who use the park and even very very fewer people who use the creek. Each day all of us that LIVE in this area, will be affected by smaller yards, to no yards, traffic practically in our living room, just so a little used park can be kept and the cost of covering a creek properly can be avoided. I don't know the exact number of people living in these homes, but it far exceeds the daily or yearly use of the park. If a developer can 'buy out' the requirement to put in a park, what is that saying about a city's commitment to parks.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our concerns. I hope that the lifestyle of those of us living on this section of the street, will be given a bit more weight than the little used park and the cost of dealing properly with the creek.

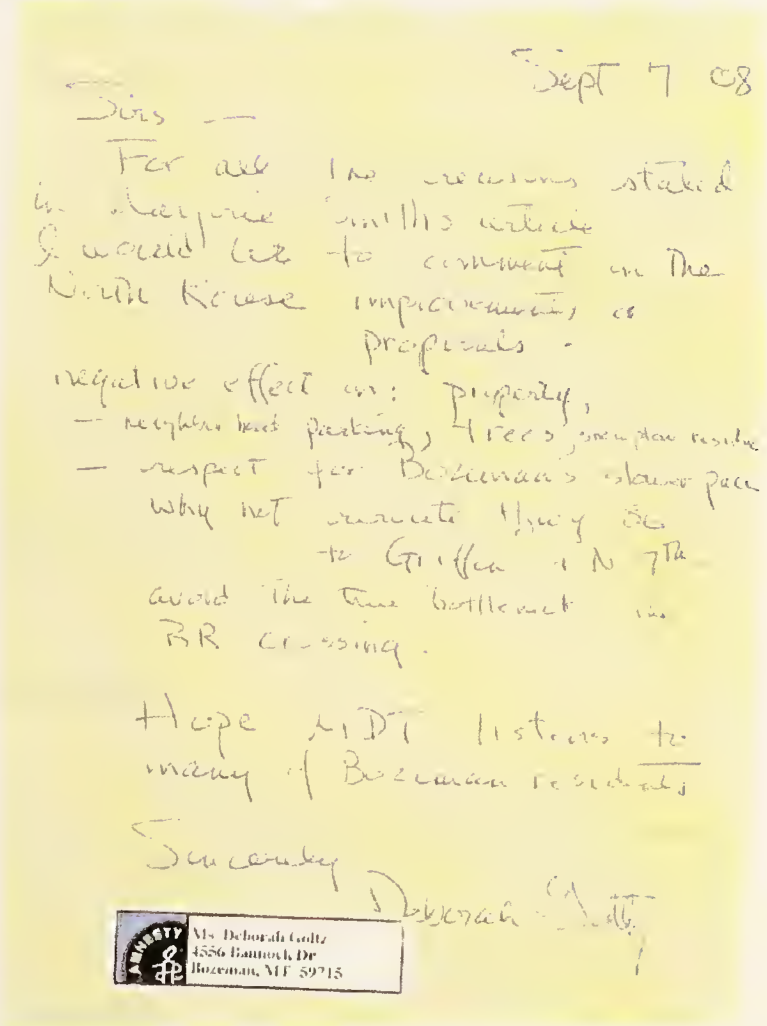
Verna Whiteman (property owner)
401 E. Lamme, Unit A
Bozeman MT 59715

Response 19

The park is protected by Section 4(f) of the United States Transportation Act. Under this regulation, no project using federal funds can impact a park unless there is no feasible alternative. In this case, a shift to the east was determined to be a feasible alternative and has been forwarded as part of the Preferred Alternative.

The Federal Highway Administration is given some discretion in the application of this protection, but the impacts to other resources that would occur because of the avoidance of the park must reach extraordinary proportions.

Comment 20



Sept 7 08

Sirs —

For all the reasons stated in Margorie Smith's article I would like to comment on the North Rouse improvements or proposals -

negative effect on: property,
— neighborhood parking, trees, [illegible] reside
— respect for Bozeman's slower pace
why not reroute traffic to Griffin & N 7th
avoid the time bottleneck in RR crossing.

Hope MDT listens to many of Bozeman residents

Sincerely
Deborah Goltz

Ms Deborah Goltz
4556 Bannock Dr
Bozeman, MT 59715

Response 20

See response to Comment 16 regarding Margorie Smith's article.

See response to Comment 12-D regarding parking.

See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

See response to Comment 13-A&B, and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue in the community and proposals to re-route traffic onto Griffin and North 7th.

Comment 21

Tom Martin
MDT Po Box 201001
Helena MT 59620

Dear Tom

21-A Please leave Rouse Ave just the way it is. We travel this route when coming into town from Jackson Creek Rd and there has never been a lot of traffic except when a train comes through. We have often thought if anything is done to that stretch of road, it should be turned into a park and the stream utilized to it□s fullest. Bozeman could use another park. Indeed many towns and cities have had the foresight to use their streams for linear parks..the more famous perhaps is Rock Creek Park in Washington DC streatching up into the Maryland counties..going past the National Zoo.

21-B So use some creativity instead of just the old cutting a swath and building a wide road that really isn't necessary. Maybe you haven□t heard, but with the price of fuel at all time highs and people moving to smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles, traffic may actually be reduced and require less road space.

Sincerely,

Albert and Victoria Scharen
4765 Aspen Lane
Boze,man MT 59715

Response 21

21-A The No-Build Alternative has been forwarded as a viable option if the Preferred Alternative proves unworkable for any reason.

There are no current or projected plans on the part of MDT or the City of Bozeman to turn this major arterial transportation route into a linear park.

21-B Direction at the federal transportation level has indicated that it is too early to speculate on the long-term effect of higher gas prices on travel. While overall vehicle miles of travel have gone down in recent months, the peak hour travel continues to remain high locally and nationally.

Comment 22

September 15, 2008

From: Hiller and Amy Higman
404 N. Rouse
Bozeman, MT 59715

To: MDT and HKM Engineering

North Rouse.
Families, a neighborhood, a community, and finally--a street.

Four years ago we bought our first home on North Rouse in Bozeman. At the time it was the only affordable property in the city. While it was on a busy state highway, we liked our location, which put us within walking distance of downtown, the library, the school our children will attend and our church.

However, we have learned over the last year that the new proposed highway project will consume our front yard, causing significant impact to our lives and those of our neighbors and, of course, the value of our home investments.

22-A The current proposed plan, to widen North Rouse to three lanes, will bring the highway within 7 feet of our front door. In addition to the obvious noise and pollution problems this plan would create, it would also leave us with no on-street parking, nor adequate parking on our property, for that matter. As homeowners, we are placed in a state of limbo, since it would be difficult if not impossible to sell our home in light of the impending road project.

Therefore, we are writing to ask the MDT (Montana Department of Transportation) and HKM Engineering to rethink the North Rouse plan. Below are some of our points for consideration.

Response 22

22-A Final right-of-way limits will not be established until the final design is complete. This process is projected to take approximately one year from issuance of this Finding of No Significant Impact. Right-of-way negotiations would begin once the final design is complete. During that phase, each individual property owner will be contacted to discuss the necessary right-of-way acquisition and to establish an agreeable price for the right-of-way. Table 3.1 in the EA identified an approximate distance from the back of sidewalk to the existing structures. Only those that were in direct conflict were shown as a complete acquisition, but it is anticipated that if the use and value of a parcel is substantially altered by the proposed project, a full acquisition may be appropriate for those residences as well. If during the next year or two, you find that you are interested in selling your home but are unable due to the pending roadway improvements, you may be able to pursue an early, or “hardship” acquisition.

22-B	SAFETY: Currently North Rouse exists as a community. Drivers slow down for bikers, pedestrians and even the occasional dog. A wider road would encourage higher speeds, making it more dangerous for everyone, including the drivers. In the small corridor from Main Street to Peach, three lanes of traffic are unnecessary. We believe two lanes will suffice and will actually assist in the slowing of traffic in what is still largely a residential area.	22-B	A three-lane roadway is a proven design to improve safety in a corridor like Rouse Avenue. It is important to recognize that the widened corridor includes bike lanes, sidewalks, boulevards, curb and gutter, and travel lanes that are actually narrower than the existing lanes. It is not anticipated that this would result in higher travel speeds. See also responses to Comments 11-E and 17 regarding operations of a two-lane roadway.
22-C	Furthermore, by narrowing the traffic from three to two lanes as it comes into a school zone, you will naturally control speed. This small change alone could save up to 8 feet of land for homes in this area, giving equity and resale values a fighting chance. The loss of parking, as the current plan has none, is disastrous for us, given it will barely leave room enough for one vehicle in our driveway. Our visitors (including elderly parents) will park some unknown distance away and be left to navigate a busy highway on foot.	22-C	See response to Comment 12-D and 14-A regarding the parking issue.
22-D	NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT: As we mentioned earlier, this section of Bozeman is one of the few remaining "affordable" neighborhoods. Recent redistricting of the schools kept the children of our neighborhood in easy walking distance of Hawthorne School, which was one of our reasons for choosing this location. Now, that walk has become much more hazardous and our school plans may change altogether, since a road built to the current plan will make our neighborhood nearly unlivable. Any incentive we as homeowners may have to improve our properties has disappeared and, with construction planned for 2012, selling does not seem to be an economically viable option for the next several years. We are truly in residential limbo.	22-D	See response to Comment 15 regarding affordable housing.

So we are asking you to please consider the plight of our family and that of our neighbors and to reconsider some aspects of the plan to keep this section of Bozeman a community neighborhood of affordable housing rather than a strip of run down rentals to view on your way into town.

Sincerely,
Hiller W. Higman
Amy D. Higman

Comment 23

Dear MT DOT,

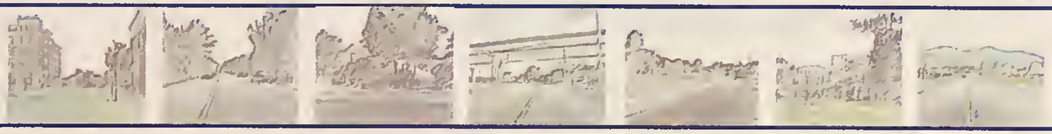
I wrote previously and said I completely supported the project, as I drive or bike the route on a daily basis.

I would like to amend my previous support. I only support the project from the intersection of Peach Street north to Story Mill Road. I do not support any widening of the street and buying additional right of way from Main Street to Peach Street. To do so would impact too many people's residences and affect the neighborhood and school negatively and increase the speeding problem in that area.

Sincerely,
Don Jackson
1280 Story Mill Road
Bozeman MT 59715

Response 23

Comment noted. (See also Comment 9).



Comment 24

**BOZEMAN MULTI-LEVEL SHOPPING
COMPLEX OWNERS ASSOCIATION
(Bozeman Hotel)**
P.O. Box 131 Bozeman, Montana 59718
406-539-4908 • Fax 406-522-7533 • Email bstoppelmfs@msn.com

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September 15, 2008

Tom Martin, MDT
P.O. Box 201001
Helena MT 59620

I am the manager of the Bozeman Hotel at 321 E. Main, Bozeman, Montana. The Bozeman Hotel is a commercial office complex with a mixture of offices, restaurants and bars. The association board would like to request clarification concerning the future plans concerning Rouse Avenue, supply information and suggestions that, hopefully, wil be useful in planning a better Rouse Avenue.

Clarification

24-A The most recent information that we have received on the recommended street plan shows minimal impact from Main Street to Mendenhall, however, there have been newspaper articles that stated the sidewalks along Rouse may be reduced to only 5 ft. wide. What are the plans for this sidewalk?

Information

The maximum pedestrian use of the sidewalk along the Bozeman Hotel is from 11 p.m. To 3 a.m. The restaurants and bars in our building that are currently open at that time are the following with their corresponding fire occupancy limits. All foot traffic from the businesses use the Rouse Avenue sidewalk except for one back door to the Pour House

Business	Fire Limit
317 Club	90
Pour House	175
Tarantino's Pizza	48
Zebra	219
Colonel Blacks	117
	649
Sobys	50 (currently not open in evening but new owners have plans to open late)
	699

In addition, our lobby is available and can be occupied by dozens more.

We believe that on a busy weekend evening there may be upwards to 1,000 people using the Rouse Avenue sidewalk. At 2 a.m., by state law, the bars close and there can be this number of people exiting the building all at the same time. An average weekend evening can have 300 or more pedestrians leaving at one time. With the new state laws with regard to smoking, this sidewalk is an additional gathering area for smokers and other groups and may already have dozens of people. These numbers of pedestrians is not just a once or twice a year occurrence but may happen frequently or even weekly.

Response 24

24-A The EA proposes to maintain the existing sidewalk widths from Main to Mendenhall. There would be no impact to the sidewalks adjacent to the Bozeman Hotel, nor to the Bozeman Hotel property itself.

Even at current sidewalk size there are many times that Rouse Avenue becomes a walkway due to the volume of pedestrian traffic. There are, of course, many cars using Rouse at the same time to travel home. The Bozeman Hotel Board is very concerned about this safety problem.

I have attached a copy of the Bozeman Downtown Partnership preliminary design for a future sidewalk, lighting improvement SID that call for additional trash cans, trees and lights on this section of sidewalk. Our Board is strongly supportive of the Downtown Partnership plans as those improvements are also needed to handle the volume of people using this sidewalk. The proposed improvements are necessary but they will take space and therefore reduce the pedestrian area.

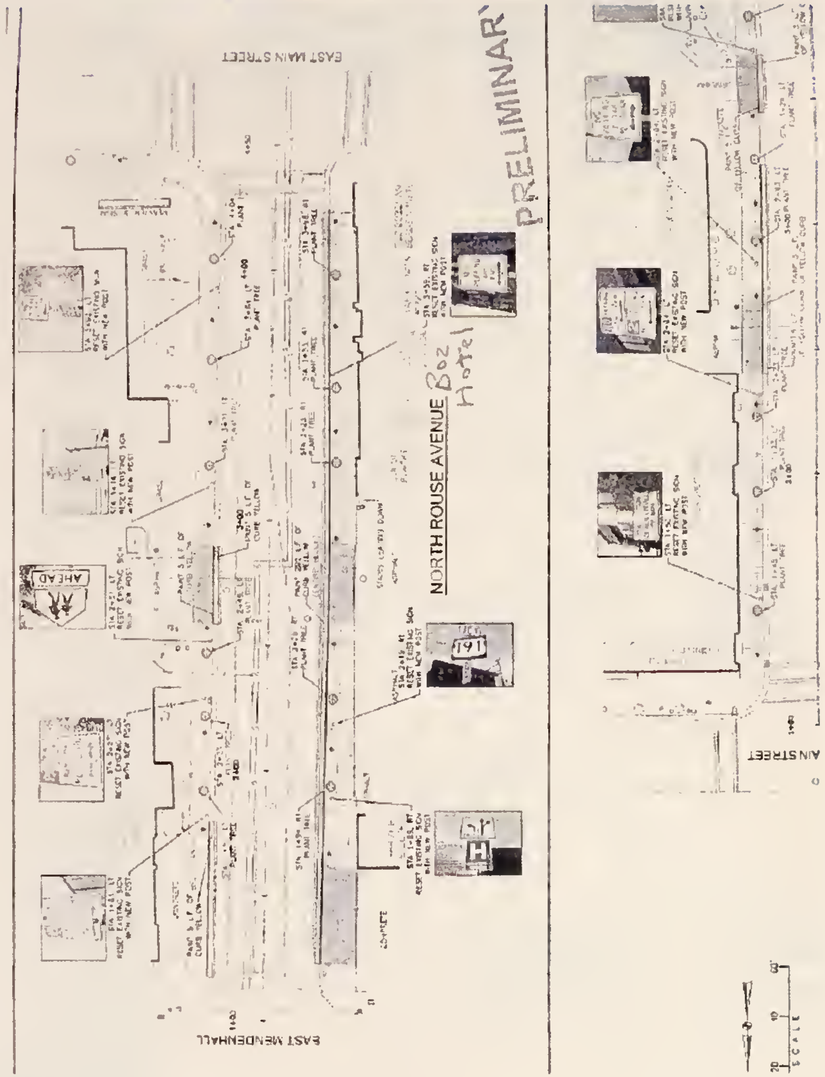
Suggestions

At minimum, we believe it is extremely important that the Bozeman Hotel sidewalk along Rouse Avenue not be reduced in size with the Rouse Avenue improvements.

24-B Our suggestion is to take a serious look at eliminating the parking that is proposed along the east side of Rouse and incorporate that area into wider sidewalks along Rouse from the alley to Main Street. Our Board hates the idea of losing any parking near the Bozeman Hotel but, due to the safety concerns listed above, we believe the increase in safety far outweighs the minor benefit from those few parking spaces.

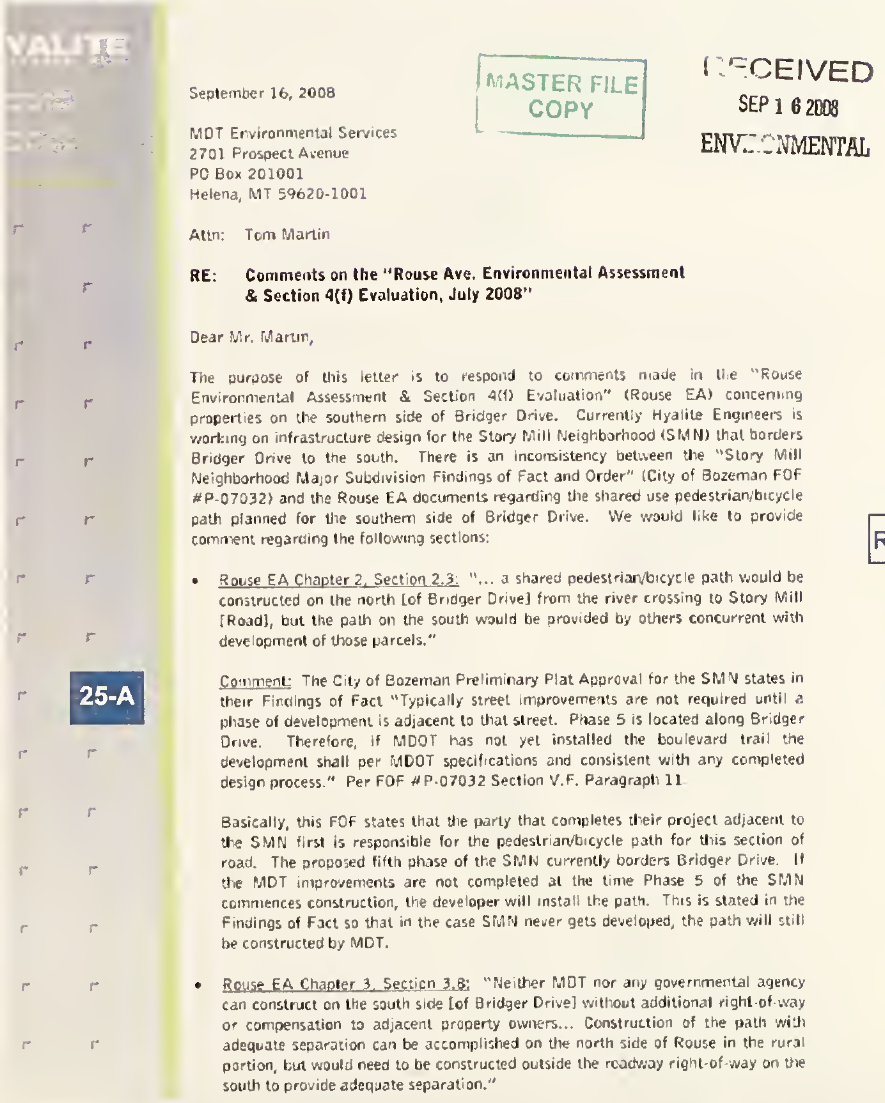
Brian J. Stoppel
Chairman
Bozeman Multi-Level Shopping Complex Owners Association

24-B The preferred alternative was intended to preserve as much on-street parking as possible throughout the corridor. The right-of-way in this area allows for the inclusion of both parking and a safe sidewalk width.



(Attachment to Brian J. Stoppel letter)

Comment 25



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September 16, 2008

MDT Environmental Services
2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

Attn: Tom Martin

RE: Comments on the "Rouse Ave. Environmental Assessment & Section 4(f) Evaluation, July 2008"

Dear Mr. Martin,

The purpose of this letter is to respond to comments made in the "Rouse Environmental Assessment & Section 4(f) Evaluation" (Rouse EA) concerning properties on the southern side of Bridger Drive. Currently Hyalite Engineers is working on infrastructure design for the Story Mill Neighborhood (SMN) that borders Bridger Drive to the south. There is an inconsistency between the "Story Mill Neighborhood Major Subdivision Findings of Fact and Order" (City of Bozeman FOF #P-07032) and the Rouse EA documents regarding the shared use pedestrian/bicycle path planned for the southern side of Bridger Drive. We would like to provide comment regarding the following sections:

- Rouse EA Chapter 2, Section 2.3: "... a shared pedestrian/bicycle path would be constructed on the north [of Bridger Drive] from the river crossing to Story Mill [Road], but the path on the south would be provided by others concurrent with development of those parcels."

  25-A

  Comment: The City of Bozeman Preliminary Plat Approval for the SMN states in their Findings of Fact "Typically street improvements are not required until a phase of development is adjacent to that street. Phase 5 is located along Bridger Drive. Therefore, if MDOT has not yet installed the boulevard trail the development shall per MDOT specifications and consistent with any completed design process." Per FOF #P-07032 Section V.F. Paragraph 11

  Basically, this FOF states that the party that completes their project adjacent to the SMN first is responsible for the pedestrian/bicycle path for this section of road. The proposed fifth phase of the SMN currently borders Bridger Drive. If the MDT improvements are not completed at the time Phase 5 of the SMN commences construction, the developer will install the path. This is stated in the Findings of Fact so that in the case SMN never gets developed, the path will still be constructed by MDT.

- Rouse EA Chapter 3, Section 3.8: "Neither MDT nor any governmental agency can construct on the south side [of Bridger Drive] without additional right-of-way or compensation to adjacent property owners... Construction of the path with adequate separation can be accomplished on the north side of Rouse in the rural portion, but would need to be constructed outside the roadway right-of-way on the south to provide adequate separation."

Response 25

25-A Comment noted and agreed.

Letter to MDT Environmental Services
RE: Comments on the "Rouse Ave. Environmental Assessment & Section 4(f) Evaluation, July 2008"
September 16, 2008
Page 2 of 2

25-B Comment: The preferred alternative as presented in the Rouse EA shows the shared use pedestrian/bicycle path as being up to ten feet wide on the southern side of Bridger Drive. This would allow for at least 22 feet of separation from edge of pavement to the path. The presence of adequate separation was verbally confirmed by Lewis Baeth, PE and Phill Odegard, PE with HKM Engineering. It is our understanding that the path can be constructed and used safely within the Bridger Drive right-of-way based on the proposed Bridger Drive alignment.

25-B See response to Comment 12-B and 12-C regarding pedestrian facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity or provide comment on this project. We look forward to coordinating with MDT and HKM on the improvements to Rouse Ave. and Bridger Drive. If you or any of the Rouse Ave. project team has any questions regarding the SMN please do not hesitate to contact me at dworkman@hyaliteeng.com or (406) 587-2781.

Sincerely,

Dustin Workman, PE, LEED AP
Project Manager

Cc: File - 081406

Comment 26

N. Rouse Planners,

The backbone of my comments is centered on the impacts on families on the east side of N. Rouse between Lamme St. and the bridge to the north. These people do not have to be impacted as severely as planned.

26-A Their lives and homes have a great value. A VERY GREAT VALUE. Do not forget this. Find ways to lessen the impacts on these folks.

Consider strongly these following options.

26-B Drop the center turn lane along this stretch. They'll cope. We'll all cope.

26-C Drop the bicycle lane. (I am the mountain bike coordinator for the Gallatin Valley Bicycle Club) Tell the City of Bozeman that this is one place in town that bicyclists could ride on the sidewalk. Make the sidewalk a foot or two wider.

26-D PUT the Gosh Darn Creek in a TUBE. Most of the people who make the anti tube comments do not live on that section of Rouse. Their comments should not carry any weight. Tubing Bozeman Creek along N. Rouse for a block is not an ecological disaster. I had to wade into that portion of the creek once to retrieve my dead cat. I was not impressed by the trench ecology. I do not believe it is essential to the fish population to retain sunlight along there. Get over it. The space occupied by the creek could accommodate much of the plan!

Imagine your relatives struggling to make house payments, living along the east side of N. Rouse. Give them a break! Ease up on the land grab.

Greg Beardslee
221 N. Church Ave.
Bozeman, MT 59715

Response 26

26-A MDT and FHWA recognize the value of both the residents and business owners within this corridor, and the importance of the route as a major transportation corridor in and through the community. The NEPA/MEPA process requires that a balanced and objective analysis of all impacts be considered, and it is for this reason that the design has minimized travel lane widths, boulevard and sidewalk widths, and moved forward with a three-lane section rather than a five-lane section as initially proposed.

26-B See response to Comment 11-E.

26-C Part of the Purpose and Need is to "enhance bike and pedestrian travel within the Rouse Avenue corridor." The bicycle lane is included in response to local planning documents and with the expressed support of the City of Bozeman, the Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board (see Comment 29), and the Gallatin Valley Land Trust. It is not safe for either bicyclists or pedestrians to share a five to seven foot wide sidewalk.

26-D During the NEPA/MEPA project development process, several resource agencies were consulted regarding potential impacts to Bozeman Creek. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks expressed serious concerns about piping such an extensive length of the creek. Several local residents also expressed their concern for piping the creek. Given the level of public concern, the substantial permitting and regulatory hurdles to overcome, and the substantial costs associated with piping the creek, the decision was made to shift the alignment to the east to avoid impacts to this resource.

Comment 27

Dear Mr. Martin:

I live in North Bozeman and have read the draft environmental statement. The main problem with the preferred alternative is that it does not take particularly good account of the facts on the ground as Rouse currently exists between Tamarack and Main St. It is currently a busy city street, lined by small businesses, houses, an elementary school and fire station. The neighborhood to the east and west are connected by school district, neighborhood association and general day to day travel. This neighborhood should be viewed as one piece and particular care should be taken to avoid splitting it in two. Alternative B and its alternatives (with the exception of the "no build") will do enough damage to the neighborhood that a new alternative should be developed.

27-A The proposed alternative, while better than the initial proposal (as I understand it, a five lane highway which looks like Alternative C), still has deficiencies that need to be addressed. Actually, all the alternatives, including the "no build" alternative don't really offer a lot of hope for the neighborhood and no alternative addresses the fact that the biggest bottleneck on the street is the railroad crossing.

Here are some thoughts on some further modifications that might actually help the traffic situation and would not be so likely to split the neighborhood in two and wouldn't fundamentally change the character of the existing street.

27-B - Griffin and Oak are both large streets designed to carry traffic and are primarily industrial in nature. There is no reason that those couldn't be looked at for further development as a way to take some of the projected traffic increase off of Rouse.

27-C - Why three lanes all the way to Main? It just doesn't make much sense. This needs to be a slow street because of the number of houses and children associated with the section between Tamarack and Main. You could continue to post it slow, but an all three lane option is going to

Response 27

27-A See response to Comment 13-C regarding the railroad crossing.

27-B See responses to Comments 13-A&B and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue.

27-C See response to Comment 11-B regarding the benefits of a center turn lane.

send the message that this is a faster road. How about keeping two lanes from Oak to Main, with turn lanes at the signals? It's pretty close to being there right now and the turn lanes and signals help where they are right now.

27-D -Peach and Rouse is a hazard. It's unfortunate, but it does appear that making that a feasible signaled turn may require that the houses go. If there is no way to make this a safe turn without removal of the houses, do the eminent domain sooner than later. I do think that Peach needs a signal. It gets really clogged at rush hour, and can be difficult at other times as well. It might be nice to have some additional parking here, but other options to consider with that small sliver of space are a little more riparian area next to the river as a buffer and encouragement of commercial space on that corner.

27-E - Bike lanes/ sidewalks: I am a big fan of both and sure see the use of them. However, it is a really tight corridor, particularly between Tamarack and Main. If you are trying to prioritize because of space, I'd say maintain and expand the sidewalks between Tamarack and Main and then do the whole bike lane/ sidewalks as planned going North from there. Between Tamarack and Main, there is the alternative of using Wallace, Church or Montana or Bozeman for biking purposes. Those are the streets I usually use. Below Tamarack, there is a bottleneck on parallel streets that can be safely used for biking, so bike lanes would be very useful there. I'd say that front yards are an important value too, so if it eliminating bike lanes gives you an extra 10 feet and that really gives people more yard, then it seems to make sense to do it. **27-F** I do think the third lane should be eliminated from consideration (with the exception of intersection turn lanes) in this section first.

27-G I appreciate the hard work and effort DOT has put into trying to find an alternative that might work for North Rouse. I realize it is difficult because you are trying to find a way to ensure smooth flow of traffic as well as provide a safer experience. I see some elements of Alternative B that are workable, but particular care should be taken to develop a new alternative for the section between Tamarack and Main.

Sincerely,

Karen Filipovich
426 N. Grand
Bozeman, MT 59715

27-D MDT does not intend to use eminent domain to acquire any residences within the Rouse Avenue corridor, and would do so only after exhausting all other reasonable negotiation opportunities. Acquisitions are anticipated to begin during right-of-way negotiations which would begin in 2010 at the earliest.

Parking is one option, and MDT will explore others as the opportunity arises.

27-E See response to Comment 1-B regarding the inclusion of bike lanes along Rouse Avenue.

27-F See response to Comment 11-E regarding the center turn lane.

27-G The Preferred Alternative is the result of several years of planning and design which included public and agency involvement, and it is considered the best alternative to satisfy the stated Purpose and Need while minimizing impacts to the surrounding community.

Comment 28

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Mr. Tom Martin
MDT
P.O. Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620

September 9, 2008

Dear Mr. Martin:

28-A I wish to express my concerns about the planned improvements to North Rouse in Bozeman. Improvements can not describe what the Montana Transportation Department has planned for North Rouse Avenue. Destroying about 125 trees, forcing home owners to sell as the street will be close to their door steps, taking away on street parking for residents who do not have a driveway is a hard sell to use the word "improvements".

Our family drives on North Rouse often, as we live 12 miles east of Bozeman, and since I became aware of the planned improvements, I have driven slower and realize how sterile North Rouse will become once the planned improvements are completed. As the newspaper articles state, the work will not begin until 1212. Public hearings are required by law with any major project that affects so many property owners. Property owners feel helpless as their protests do not seem to matter in the big picture. Are bicycle lanes more important that the home owners rights? I question how many people will ever walk along Rouse Avenue to warrant sidewalks, with boulevard strips to maintain space for snow removal.

28-B An alternate plan, as proposed by Marjorie Smith's article on September 5th in the Bozeman Chronicle, suggests re-routing Highway 86 from Bridger Canyon Road onto Griffin Drive to North Seventh. Was this idea considered? People would not be forced to move, trees would not be chopped down, millions of dollars could be saved by moving Highway 86 to the end of North Rouse. Closer to the railroad tracks, improvements have been made on the west side of No. Rouse, with new businesses opened, along with landscaping enhancements that did not exist before the renovations to the old buildings. No matter how wide North Rouse might be widened, there will still be traffic stops due to trains passing through on a daily basis. How about restricting truck traffic on North Rouse? The corner of Peach Street and N. Rouse is a very difficult place for cars to turn left or right onto No. Rouse. That area would be much safer with a traffic light. I never travel down Peach St. when leaving Bozeman and prefer to use the safer location of Tamarack with a traffic light. The new lights on Oak and Griffin have made traveling much safer for anyone turning left onto Rouse or Bridger Drive. The only time I can recall of a traffic jam on No. Rouse, and continuing on Bridger Drive were the several $10 skiing days at Bridger Ski Hill!

The current proposed plan for changing North Rouse in Bozeman is difficult to accept. Surely this plan can be revised with greater concerns for property owners rights, cutting down of beautiful trees and a greater effort to save millions of dollars. Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Sincerely,

Margaret M. Davis
Margaret M. Davis

406-586-1562
P.O. Box 4350
Bozeman, Mt 59772

Response 28

28-A See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

28-B See responses to Comments 13-A and B and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue.

As a state route, MDT and the City of Bozeman cannot restrict truck traffic on Rouse Avenue.

Comment 29

THE CITY OF BOZEMAN
20 E. OLIVE ~ P.O. BOX 1230
BOZEMAN, MONTANA 59771-1230

BOZEMAN AREA BICYCLE ADVISORY BOARD
PHONE: (406) 582-2250 ~ FAX: (406) 582-2263
E-MAIL: bikeboard@bozeman.net

MEMORANDUM

TO: **DARRYL L. JAMES,** ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER, HKM ENGINEERING
JEFF EBERT, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR, MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FROM: **BOZEMAN AREA BICYCLE ADVISORY BOARD**

RE: **ROUSE AVENUE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

DATE: **SEPTEMBER 17TH, 2008**

Below are comments from the Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board (BABAB) regarding the Rouse Avenue Environmental Assessment.

29-A The Bike Board unanimously supports the "Preferred Alternative," which includes bike lanes throughout the corridor, along with the following amendments. We recommend a full urban section for the entire length of the project. We feel that a separated shared-use path on only one side of the road (as suggested) is a dangerous situation for cyclists (given the number of crossings in this section) and, therefore, recommend a sidewalk (6') to be built on both sides of the roadway. We understand that additional right-of-way may need to be secured for this option but would highly recommend exploring this opportunity to provide the safest, most consistent facility. Where parking may exist, we recommend a 6' bike lane to allow for adequate room for cyclists to dodge open car doors without having to swerve too far into the travel lane.

29-B The recently completed "Hawthorne Safe Routes to School Improvement Plan" should also be implemented in accordance with this project. Many "Engineering Next Steps" have been identified to make this area safer for students (pages 31-35).

29-C Finally, we would like to encourage the preservation of as many existing trees as possible. We recognize there will be losses with this project, but would hope to retain as many large growth trees as possible to retain the current natural setting. This may include the elimination of turn lanes (while keeping bike lanes and sidewalks) or acquiring additional property to be turned into off-street parking in order to reduce the street width by eliminating on-street parking.

Thank you for helping to create a safe environment for our cyclist and pedestrian citizenry. We are proud to live in such a progressive community!

Response 29

29-A See response to Comment 1-B regarding the limits of the urban section.

29-B The project team has reviewed the Safe Routes to Schools plan and did not find any conflicts with the proposed improvements along Rouse Avenue.

29-C See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.
See response to Comment 12-D regarding the center turn lane.
See response to Comment 12-D and 14-A regarding on-street parking.

Comment 30

CHARLES R. SWART, SURVEYOR
324 SOUTH GRAND AVENUE
BOZEMAN, MONTANA 49715
406-586-2623

15 August 2008

Editor
BOZEMAN DAILY CHRONICLE
Bozeman, Montana

The proposed major changes to the design and construction of Rouse Avenue from Main Street to Griffin Avenue are covered in detail in a publication "Rouse Avenue – Bozeman – Environmental Assessment". If you are concerned about the future of our city I recommend that you call 406-444-7228 and ask the very courteous young lady for a free copy of the document. A public hearing on this matter will be held at the Bozeman Senior Center at 6:00 P.M. on Wednesday, 27 August 2008. Please attend if you are able.

Briefly, here are a few of the items covered in this book. Five options are discussed, from a "no build" option to the most radical, which mandates the demolition of the Bozeman Hotel for the installation of a five lane road! The following are from the "recommended" option. No through traffic lanes would be added, but only sidewalks, boulevards, bicycle lanes, and a center left turn lane.

30-A As you head north past Lamme Street on Rouse Avenue, one of the first things you see is the massive 48 inch diameter cottonwood on the east side of the street. Under the recommended option, this magnificent tree, along with every other tree within 15 to 30 feet outside of the existing right of way line (more than 125 trees, according to page 62) from Lamme Street to Griffin Drive, would be destroyed.

30-B All on-street parking would be eliminated along this route, including resident parking (pages 27-30). Seventy-eight property ownerships would be "affected" (page 39). The increased right of way width, particularly along the single family residential area south of Peach Street, would result in the destruction of the two homes at the southeast corner of Rouse Avenue and Peach Street, as well as additional buy-outs because of proximity of the right-of-way line to the front doors (pages 39 and 40). Page 39 also tells us that some of these lots might be used for parking lots to compensate for the loss of on-street parking!

The construction as proposed would result in a social and scenic train wreck such as we have not seen for some time.

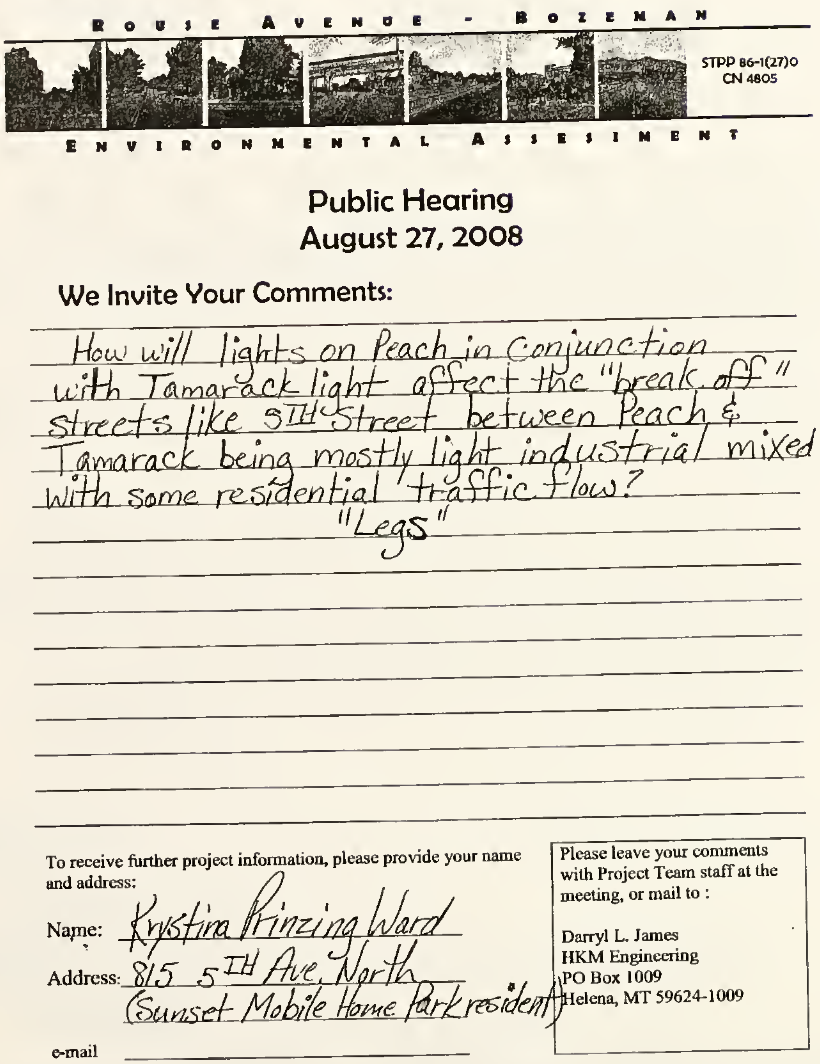
Charles R. Swart

Response 30

30-A See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

30-B See response to Comment 12-D and 14-A regarding on-street parking.

Comment 31



ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

How will lights on Peach in Conjunction with Tamarack light affect the "break off" streets like 5TH Street between Peach & Tamarack being mostly light industrial mixed with some residential traffic flow?
"Legs"

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Krystina Prinzing Ward
Address: 815 5TH Ave. North
(Sunset Mobile Home Park resident)
e-mail

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

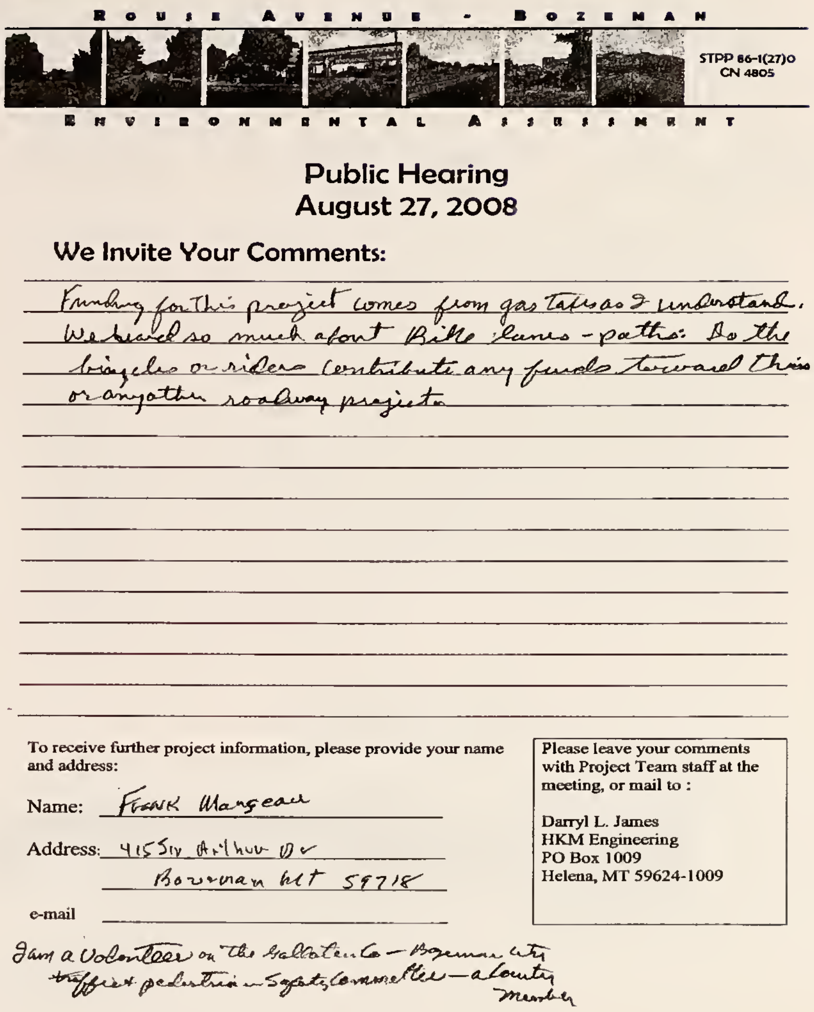
Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 31

The proposed improvements in the Preferred Alternative would improve traffic flow not only along Rouse Avenue, but improve access to Rouse Avenue at the signalized intersections.

It is not anticipated that new signals would induce new trips or substantially alter existing travel patterns.

Comment 32



ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

Funding for this project comes from gas taxes as I understand. We heard so much about Bike lanes - paths: Do the bicycles or riders contribute any funds toward this or any other roadway projects

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Frank Mangeau

Address: 4155 Sir Arthur Dr
Bozeman MT 59718

e-mail

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

I am a Volunteer on the Gallatin Co - Bozeman City traffic pedestrian Safety Committee - a County Member

Response 32

The federal transportation funding bill (SAFETEA-LU [Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users]) requires that transportation improvements consider opportunities to improvements for all modes of travel, which includes single occupant vehicles, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Comment 33

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

I would like to suggest that North Rouse be made into a one-way street from Tamarack going South and a street light at Peach + Rouse would take care of a lot of problems.
Then, you could make North Wallace a "one-way" from Main to Tamarack.
This would leave the remainder of Rouse from Tamarack North open for 2 way. Or as one suggestion by Marjorie Smith - use West Griffin as the arterial, taking a lot of traffic off Rouse.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Florence Groth

Address: 701 S. Willson

e-mail

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 33

While a one-way couplet may provide additional capacity and is an appropriate solution in certain circumstances, the trend in urban traffic engineering is suggesting that couplets are less than desirable in densely developed residential areas. An increasing number of communities are less satisfied with the one-way couplets than with standard two-way streets, and are pursuing conversion back to two-way streets. These conversion projects result in improved safety, a reduction in traffic intrusion into neighborhoods, and slower travel speeds – all of which have been concerns and desires expressed by public participants in the development of the Rouse Avenue project. Based on the potential for increased travel speeds through residential areas along Rouse, the increased potential for neighborhood cut-through traffic between Rouse and Wallace, the increase in out-of-direction travel for local residential and business access, and the potential for confusion for visitor and recreational travelers utilizing this regional corridor, a one-way conversion has not been pursued in the Rouse Avenue corridor.

See responses to Comments 13-A and B and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue, as well as Griffin.

Comment 34

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments: Why couldn't the bike lanes be incorporated into the sidewalks rather than the streets. It seems like there would be less traffic contact and it makes better sense than having a person on a bike competing with a 2 Ton vehicle. The sidewalks could be made wider, striped to indicate a bike lane and the street width made narrower. A bike-pedestrian accident would be less damaging than a bike-auto or truck accident.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: CHAD A GROTH
Address: 327 N Rouse (OUR RENTAL)
701 S WILLSON (MAIL ADD.)
~~[illegible]~~ BOZEMAN, MT 59715-5240

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 34

The American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and Bozeman City Code state that "designated use of sidewalks (as a signed shared facility) for bicycle travel is unsatisfactory. It is important to recognize that the development of extremely wide sidewalks does not necessarily add to the safety of sidewalk bicycle travel. . . . Sidewalk bikeways should be considered only under certain limited circumstances, such as: A) to provide bikeway continuity along high-speed or heavily traveled roadways having inadequate space for bicyclists, and uninterrupted by driveways and intersections for long distances. B) On long narrow bridges . . ." Additionally, a shared facility is not considered satisfactory because "sidewalks are typically designed for pedestrian speeds and maneuverability and are not safe for higher speed bicycle use. At intersections, motorists are often not looking for bicyclists (who are traveling at higher speeds than pedestrians) entering the crosswalk area, particularly when motorists are making a turn." *(Source: AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities)*

Comment 35

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

35-A I truly believe your DOT is making a huge mistake tearing up Rouse Ave in Bozeman. It runs parallel to N. 7th Street which is already wide and able to handle the traffic.

Bridger Drive could go straight to 7th avoiding Rouse thereby saving the trees and hardships in our neighborhood.

35-B The city of Bozeman should make a combination bicycle-sidewalk along Rouse — it would please everyone!!

Thanks for your consideration

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Mary Ann Nielsen

Address: 315 N. Church
Bozeman, Mt. 59715

e-mail amnielsen315@gmail.com

Also: Arthur R. Nielsen
315 N. Church
Bozeman, Mt. 59715

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

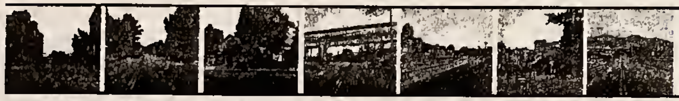
Response 35

35-A See responses to Comments 13-A and B and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue and North 7th.

35-B See response to Comment 34, above, regarding bike/pedestrian facility safety.

Comment 36

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN



STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

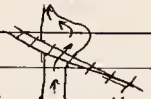
Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments: THE PROJECT LOOKS GOOD TO ME:

I AM IN FAVOR OF THE BIKE LANES AND ELIMINATING ON-STREET PARKING FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE PROJECT. ROUSE RECEIVES A LOT OF BICYCLE TRAFFIC.

36-A I SUGGEST PLANNING THE PROJECT SO THAT THE FULL WIDTH SECTION CAN BE COMPLETED UNDER THE I-90 OVERPASS IN THE FUTURE WHEN THE OVERPASS BRIDGE IS REPLACED AT THE END OF ITS USEFUL LIFE.

36-B THE AASHTO GREEN BOOK FOR BICYCLES HAS A DETAIL SHOWING HOW BIKE LANES CAN BE MADE TO CROSS RR TRACKS THAT ARE ON A SKEW. THIS MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE FOR THIS PROJECT.



To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Jim Nallick

Address: 1410 Cherry Dr.
Bozeman, MT 59715

e-mail jim@nallick.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 36

36-A The only element eliminated under the new Interstate structure would be the center turn lane. All other amenities would be maintained.

36-B The design details for the bike crossing of the railroad will be considered during final design.

Comment 37

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

As an owner of a business on Rouse Ave, my concerns and interests differ from those of homeowners. For example, I think more traffic is better. But I am also glad that sidewalks and bike lanes will appear, especially as a lot of kids patronize my business (Taekwondo West at 708 N Rouse). I am concerned that my customers will have a hard time reaching us. **37-A** And I will be very sorry to lose the two beautiful trees that front my property and house. They significantly enhance the curb appeal of our location. **37-B** I wonder if there is any way to estimate the impact this project will have on my commercial property.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: BRANDON SALTZ
Address: 711 N GRAND AVE
Bozeman MT 59715
e-mail bsaltz@taekwondowest.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

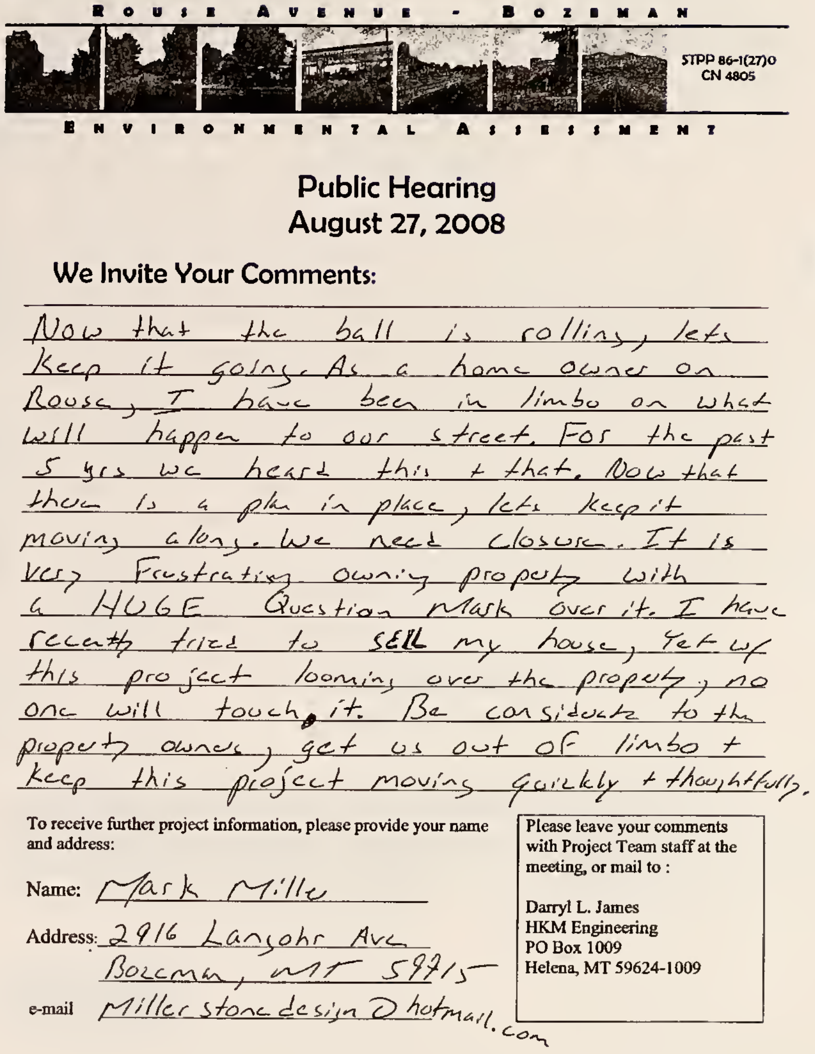
Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 37

37-A See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

37-B Impacts to individual properties will be identified during final design, and compensation discussed during the right-of-way negotiations.

Comment 38



ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

Now that the ball is rolling, lets keep it going. As a home owner on Rouse, I have been in limbo on what will happen to our street. For the past 5 yrs we heard this + that. Now that there is a plan in place, lets keep it moving along. We need closure. It is very frustrating owning property with a HUGE Question Mark over it. I have recently tried to SELL my house, yet w/ this project looming over the property, no one will touch it. Be considerate to the property owners, get us out of limbo + keep this project moving quickly + thoughtfully.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Mark Mille

Address: 2916 Langohr Ave
Bozeman, MT 59715

e-mail Millerstonedesign@hotmail.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 38

The NEPA/MEPA process requires that state and federal agencies take a hard look at the potential impacts from these types of projects. Rouse Avenue is a very constrained corridor, and the project team has taken a substantial amount of time to develop a Preferred Alternative that provides substantive safety and capacity improvements while minimizing impacts to the surrounding community.

We currently anticipate that the project will move into final design in 2009, and right-of-way acquisition could begin as early as 2010. See response to Comment 22 regarding the potential for earlier discussions for right-of-way acquisition.

Comment 39

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

39-A It is critical to continue the sidewalk onto the Boys : Girls Club property, to provide a safe pedestrian link for the children; we prefer it all the way to Story Mill

39-B Can the MDOT add a left turn arrow on Main, onto Rouse, where they put new traffic lights last year?

39-C Please choose street lights that are like the ones on Main ST, attractive and not the huge overhead lights. Main ST lights look great, as do the crosswalks.

39-D MDOT left alot of gravel on sidewalks @ new traffic lights @ Griffin : Rouse. It still isn't cleaned up. How can we be certain they will clean up after this project?

39-E A continuous bike path from Main to Story Mill is very important as is a separate sidewalk for pedestrians. Thankyou.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Heather Jernberg

Address: 1013 BOYLAN RD
BOZEMAN 59715

e-mail heather@boreasgroup.us

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James Facilitator
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 39

39-A See response to Comment 1-B regarding the extension of the sidewalk beyond Griffin.

39-B Work on Main Street would be outside the scope of this proposed project.

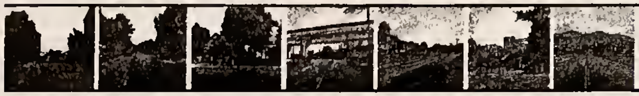
39-C See response to Comment 11J with regard to street lighting.

39-D The construction contractor has removed excess gravel as a part of a punch list of items to obtain project approval from the City of Bozeman and MDT.

39-E The dedicated bicycle lane is planned as part of this project from Main Street to Story Mill.

Comment 40

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN



STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

40-A Most important to me:- complete sidewalks and bike lanes along entire corridor. Turn lanes at critical intersections. Boulevard strip with street trees are also very important to the walkability and **40-B** livability of this corridor. I would like to have a 10 ft bike ped path on the the east side of Rouse from Oak to Story Mill with extension to the "M" in **40-C** future improvements. Why not hang the sidewalk over Bozeman Creek (Boardwalk) to allow more right-of-way on tight spots in the corridor adjacent to Bozeman Creek.

40-D ☆ Help tie a bike ped trail from Oak to the Story Mill Trail by using the Interstate Right of Way?

40-E Would like a separate bridge for the shared use path over the East Gallatin.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Gary Vodehnal
Address: 614 South 7th
Bozeman, MT 59715
e-mail gary @ gvlt.org

Best ☆ P.O Box 7021
Boz. MT 59771 ☆

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 40

40-A See response to Comment 1-B regarding the extension of the sidewalk beyond Griffin.

40-B The project would include either a separated bike/pedestrian path as originally proposed, or an urban section with a bike lane, curb/gutter, boulevard, and sidewalk. Right-of-way constraints and costs would make it unreasonable to include both in this corridor.

40-C Cantilevering over the creek would essentially enclose the creek. Piping the creek is less costly, and was still determined to be too expensive and result in too severe of an impact from the perspective of the resource agencies.

40-D Any trail improvements outside the right-of-way necessary for the proposed improvements along Rouse Avenue would have to be conducted under a separate project.

40-E Bicyclists and pedestrians can safely use the East Gallatin bridge crossing as outlined in response to Comment 1-A.

Comment 41

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

I have serious concerns regarding the final width of
41-A the sidewalk in front of 109 N. Rouse. My understanding
of the EA is that is will be reduced by 50%. This
proposed condition degrades pedestrian safety by
41-B placing moving vehicles too close to pedestrians.
This condition will also create a snow removal issue
as plows routinely place SIGNIFICANT amounts of snow
onto the existing sidewalk. (i.e. There will not be a place
for snow storage)

(I own the property at 109 N. Rouse)

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Ben Lloyd

Address: 109 N. Rouse, #1
Bozeman, MT 59715

e-mail ben@commaq.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

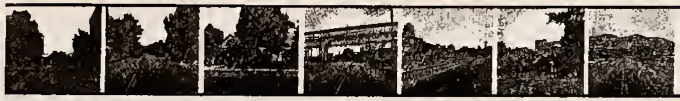
Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 41

41-A The sidewalk is narrowed from the existing conditions in this portion of the corridor to accommodate a turn lane onto Mendenhall. Vehicles in this lane will be traveling relatively slowly as they are preparing to make a turning movement.

41-B Snow plowing practices in this area will have to be modified.

Comment 42

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

42-A

F DONT OVERDO IT. ROUSE IS UNIQUE AND CAN REASONABLY CARRY ONLY SO MUCH TRAFFIC. FIND THAT NUMBER AND EXPLORE ALTERNATIVES (OAK LOOP? ? N. 7TH) TO FINISH THE JOB.

42-B

> WHAT HAPPENS IF OAK LOOP IS BUILT?

> ROUSE CANT DO "IT" ALL... WHAT OTHER ALTERNATIVES ARE THERE? IT IS ODD TO NOT LOOK AT / SEE THE BIG PICTURE.

> LOVE CURBS, BIKE LANES, SIDEWALKS.

> THIS IS TRICKY ... THANKS FOR CAREFUL & HONEST STUDY AND OBJECTIVE SOLUTIONS.

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: ROB PERTZBORN

Address: 518 N. TRACY
BOZO

e-mail RJPERTZ@MSN. COM.

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 42

42-A See responses to Comments 13-A and B and 16 regarding the transportation role of Rouse Avenue and the use of North 7th and Griffin as alternate routes.

42-B Rouse Avenue is just one major arterial in the urban network and needs to operate as efficiently as possible in order to minimize the load on other lesser facilities. The Bozeman Area Transportation Plan process is the tool used to analyze the "big picture" and is the impetus for this proposed project. Other roadway improvements are necessary to satisfy the overall network efficiency needs.

Comment 43

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

I prefer the "preferred plan".
a I would like to see the
43-A MDT do a better job of addressing
the issue of yellow signs
that indicate a pedestrian
43-B Crossing. at Story Mill
vehicles regularly drive
through the intersection when
pedestrians are there. It's a
mistake to eliminate the "STOP"
for Pedestrians in Cross Walk.
add "STOP" back in or put a
traffic officer at every one. - Other
States have the words - please bring
them back

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Carolyn Hopper
Address: 3120 augusta Dr
Bozeman MT 59715
e-mail

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

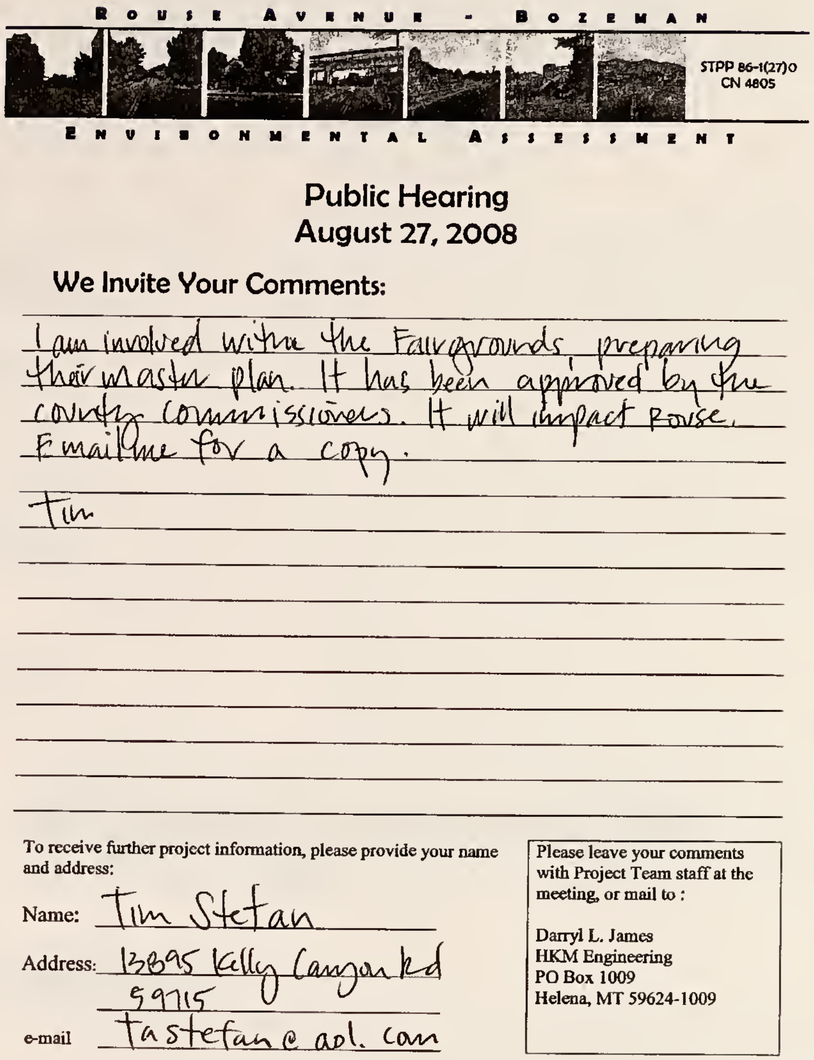
Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 43

43-A During final design, MDT will consider opportunities for the installation of pedestrian crossing signs where appropriate.

43-B A traffic signal is currently planned for the intersection at Story Mill. See response to Comment 1-F regarding the timing of installation of that signal.

Comment 44



ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

I am involved with the Fairgrounds preparing their master plan. It has been approved by the county commissioners. It will impact Rouse. Email me for a copy.

Tim

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Tim Stefan

Address: 13895 Kelly Canyon Rd
59715

e-mail tastefan@aol.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 44

From the graphic obtained from Stefan Associates (below), it is not clear what impacts the proposed improvements at the Fair Grounds would have on Rouse Avenue. MDT will continue to coordinate with the County as the project progresses.

Gallatin County
Fair Grounds
Master Plan

July 2007
Stefan Associates
Architecture Landscape Architecture

Comment 45

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

45-A Please include a left-turn lane for northbound traffic (only) at Lone Mountain Gymnastics (just north of Oak)! It backs up badly at 4, 5, + 6 pm on school days.

45-B If there is any way to get bus stops out of the traffic lanes, please do it.

45-C Please don't over-sign the road (like Durston, 11th to 19th) – so many signs are distracting (and ugly).

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Deborah McAfee

Address:

e-mail dgm@mcafeeoffice.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

Response 45

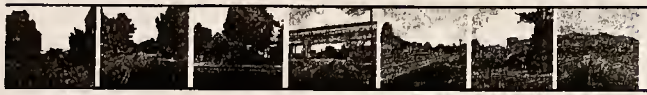
45-A The additional lane requested would not fit within the constraints in this area. There is also an operational concern with the close proximity of the Birch intersection and the railroad crossing. The preferable traffic movement would be to turn left on Oak and then right into the parking lot at the gymnastics center.

45-B It is generally safer to have the buses stop in the travel lane. If they pull out of the traffic flow, they have to re-enter which is difficult and often dangerous during the periods of peak traffic flow.

45-C A detailed signing plan will be developed in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) during final design.

Comment 46

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN



STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

We Invite Your Comments:

46-A I read your plan downloaded from the internet. I get the idea of plan A, B C+D which have been scrutenized + analyzed to determine the best plan. Good Job - someone put a lot of work + thought into that process. What I can't say is the fact that you want to propose "none of the above" alternate plan that doesn't even have a letter - "E?" It looks a

46-B lot like plan B' including sidewalks, boulevards etc from Bond to Griffith. None of the other plans A B C or D had sidewalks from Bond to Griffith. Sounds to me like you throw the B.S. out with the Bathwater. Did the "preferred alternative" go through the same scruting + analysis as A B C+D? Who wants sidewalks + boulevards through an industrial area? PS. You don't indicate any congestion

46-C at the RR crossing - why not? That is not only the smallest part of the funnel but they put a cork in it for long waits several times every day. ↑ Bottle neck?

To receive further project information, please provide your name and address:

Name: Hubert Bates

Address: 1602 N. Rouse
Bozeman, MT 59715

e-mail mtnlw@montana.com

Please leave your comments with Project Team staff at the meeting, or mail to :

Darryl L. James
HKM Engineering
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624-1009

46-D * Hopefully, this project will be better co-ordinated + managed than the N Rouse Paving project 2 years ago. The road before repaving was safer for pedestrians + bicycles than after the paving project. - you added pullouts for vistas but took away pathways.

Response 46

46-A Alternatives A, B, C and D were fully developed to address the stated purpose and need. The impacts from those alternatives were analyzed, and in an attempt to further minimize impacts, the design of Alternative B was modified. The Preferred Alternative did undergo the same level of scrutiny as the other build alternatives.

46-B Sidewalks and boulevards were included in the section from Bond to Griffin based largely on input from City staff and public comment. See also the response to Comment 1-B.

46-C See responses to Comments 13-C and 36 regarding the railroad crossing constraints.

46-D A construction staging and sequencing plan will be developed during final design to ensure that Rouse Avenue is still accessible during construction. Once the project is complete, the route will be much safer for all modes of travel.

Comment 47

RECEIVED
SEP 1 9 2008
ENVIRONMENTAL

Dear Mr. Tom Martin,

I have been driving Rouse Street my whole life and do not want to see the creek disturbed or the trees destroyed. We do not need your improvements. Go north or east to make your main arteries, leave Rouse alone. Make more linier trails for walking to work and recreation and schools and more bike/skate paths for folks, and really think about what we need in the future with global warming and all you must not cut the trees and let the car rule everything. What about all the birds that use those trees and the shade and habitat they create in the riparian area? You can't sacrifice that for cars.

Marjorie Smith had good ideas in her editorial Sept 5 in the Bozeman Chronicle. Think greener, think people power, pedal power. Think underpass or move that dam train tracks.

Yours Truly,

Theresia Konrad

Response 47

See responses to Comments 13-A and B and 16 regarding the role of Rouse Avenue in Bozeman.

The proposed improvements are intended to improve travel for all modes within the Rouse Avenue corridor, so would include the requested linear trail for pedestrian and bicycle commuters and recreationists.

See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

An underpass was considered but determined to be unreasonably expensive. The EA did not consider moving the train tracks, which would also be prohibitively expensive and result in much more of an impact to the community than the impacts in the Rouse Avenue Corridor.

Comment 48

RECE'' '
SEP 1 9 2008
ENVIRON....

MASTER FILE
COPY

TO:
Tom Martin
17 Sept. 2008

48-A The plans you have for Rouse Street in Bozeman do not address Bozeman's future needs in a post carbon economy. Seriously. We must not waste money on infrastructure that does not consider our commitment to our children, and their children. Plans must reflect the needs of an extremely local economy, a fifty-year projection of what our needs will be.

48-B Both Rouse and Griffin are my access to Bridger Canyon, where in 1986 I purchase land and built a home and raised my three kids and various livestock and crops. These two roads are vital to my access. They need over or/and under passes, a frequent bus system, and a safe bike path that is FAR from trucks and cars. A trail/road for horses FAR from cars would be excellent.

Thank you for your time,
Secilia Marino
1714 B west Beall
Bozeman, MT 59715

Response 48

48-A The plans are reflective of the anticipated growth in the Bozeman area, and are intended to consider the transportation demands of all users over the next 20+ years. Projections beyond 50 years are highly speculative and would likely result in unnecessary expenditures.

48-B Rouse Avenue is a major arterial and does provide critical access to and from Bridger Canyon and downtown Bozeman. It is not clear from the comment where "over/and under passes" should have been considered, but these types of structures are very costly and require large construction footprints that would result in more impacts than the Preferred Alternative.

See response to Comment 40 regarding improvements outside the Rouse Avenue corridor.

Comment 49

RECEIVED
SEP 1 9 2008
ENVIRONMENTAL

MASTER FILE
COPY

Dear Tom Martin or the MDT

We have driven this road our whole lives. I am 31; my brother and sister are 21 and 18.

Our parents raised us on 80 acres in the Bridger Mountains and we do not want to see the trees cut or the creek harmed on Rouse Street. Your EIS must address the real future needs of the Bozeman community. We must be ready for the post carbon future, for a strong local economy where we produce most of what we need, use, eat, and enjoy.

Sincerely,
Coyote Marino, Aspen Marino, Micah Marino

Response 49

See response to Comment 5-A regarding impacts to trees.

See response to Comment 26 regarding impacts to Bozeman Creek.

See response to Comment 16 regarding the intent of the project to address existing and projected traffic demand.

Appendix B – Hearing Transcript and Responses

Verbal testimony was also provided at the Public Hearing and is included in this Appendix. The following individuals provided testimony:

Comment Letter	Name	Transcript Page Number
A	Christopher Spegis	B-12
B	Hiller Higman	B-13
C	Ted Lange	B-13
D	Charles Swart	B-14
E	Andrew Epple	B-15
F	Robert Banis	B-15
G	Peter Rugheimer	B-16
H	Ralph Zimmer	B-16
I	Debra DeBode	B-17
J	Larry Brown	B-17
K	Brian Metsger	B-18
L	Bill Harston	B-18
M	Jena Caplette	B-18
N	Linda Locke	B-19
O	Kathie Callahan	B-19
P	Christopher Spegis	B-19
Q	Krystine Ward	B-20
R	Sharon Nelson	B-20
S	Tara (?)	B-21

A copy of the sign-in sheets from the Hearing follows the transcript.

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING

CN 4805
ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
8/27/08
Bozeman Senior Center
Bozeman, MT

NOTE: This is a partial transcript. The introduction and presentation portions were excluded.

QUESTION/CLARIFICATION PERIOD:

Q: (Sam Haraldson) I'm not representing anyone. I'm just curious on the perception where the shared use path is that is not going in with the Rouse Reconstruction, with the development that goes in there will there be any chance that they could deny that path?

A: (Darryl James) As of right now it's part of an approved plat. The condition of that plat is just as I said – if this develops before Rouse Avenue develops, then the developer would construct the shared use path. If the roadway improvements come before the development then it will be constructed as part of the improvements. So right now, as part of their approval, they can't back out of that.

Q: (Peter Rugheimer) I live on Story Mill Road. Two questions with respect to the shared use pathway – can you just give us an overview of what's being shared there, is it pedestrian and bikes and baby strollers and that kind of thing. Then secondly, is that just a pathway on the east side of the road? Would there be a mirror image of that on the other side of the road on the north side?

A: (Darryl James) The west and north sides would be constructed as part of this project because there is available right-of-way there. The challenge on the east and south sides is that we would be acquiring additional right-of-way. That's why we pushed it off and said as a condition of approval for the development, let's do that as it develops. That way it can be put in where it makes sense and we're not putting some other constraint in there for the development of those parts. The shared use path is for pedestrians and bicyclists.

A: (Phil Odegard) The width for a shared use pathway is typically 8-10 feet. We are showing 10 feet right now. The idea is that it can be used by bicyclists and pedestrians. There is also going to be along here, for commuter traffic for bicycles, there will be a bike lane on the roadway. This will be separated as far as is practicable from that main line roadway. On the south and east sides you actually have 70 feet of right-of-way on that part of the roadway, so we can get pretty good separation from the roadway on that side. On the north and west sides the right-of-way is a lot tighter – we only have 30 feet.

So to fit that in, there is going to have to be a little bit of right-of-way acquisition through some of those parcels and it will be closer to the road. We've tried to maximize the separation between the two because we understand that the closer that is to the main line, it could cause confusion with the drivers and also cause some hesitation for people to use it, so we are trying to keep those as far apart as possible.

A: (Jon Henderson) I'm the Chairperson of the Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board. I've attended several of your public meetings for the Rouse Project and I've got to tell you that you are doing great work. From our perspective you've done a very good job of trying to safely accommodate the cyclists and we're very pleased with your efforts, so I commend you for that. This road is complimentary as well as you know we're doing a major update for the Transportation Plan here in the valley and a lot of the concepts that we're going forward with for non-motorized travel are really complimented well here with this project. So just a couple of points of observation and alternative recommendations – we absolutely support a complete bike lane from Mendenhall to Story Mill. We feel that is an absolute need given the nature of the roadway. It's a principle arterial and we really want to make sure that on-street travel is going to be safe and it's going to be maintained. My question is could we possibly entertain continuing the urban section all the way to Story Mill? As cyclists and from the point of view of the Board, there are a lot of safety concerns with the bike path in this area of town especially with the type of crossings and especially on one side of the road. So we are going to propose, and we will be providing some formal comments to that fact, that we would prefer that it be a continuous urban street section with six foot sidewalks, bike lanes, curb and gutter the entire way out as opposed to a shared use path.

Com: (Darryl James) Just to be clear again, right now we want to address specific questions and clarifications on the EA. I want to get stuff like that addressed in our formal hearing, so we can respond to it formally in the FONSI because those are great comments and we don't want to miss those. So if you've got questions or clarifications on the EA, that is what we are doing now. Then we will take your formal comments and other ideas afterwards.

Q: (Kathy Beardslee) On the shared use path, in the winter who is responsible for maintaining it?

A: (Darryl James) Mainly the Department of Transportation would be responsible for maintaining it. I don't know if there is an agreement with the City, but it would be maintained by either the City or the MDT.

Q: (Kathy Beardslee) And that means snow removal?

A: (Darryl James) It does.

Q: (Tim Kearns) I have an interest in the property in that general area. Am I correct in understanding that the curb and gutter and sidewalk section, those are not beyond the bridge?

A: (Darryl James) That's correct.

Q: (Tim Kearns) The City of Bozeman of course requires any new developments in that area to install sidewalks as well as the Master Plans that are approved by the City of Bozeman requires that same condition and the Girls and Boys Club, of course, know this is a high traffic area for kids. Does the State have no interest in extending that sidewalk to Story Mill? Do you not have the right-of-way?

A: (Darryl James) What was the determination on the rural sections and why we ended at Griffin? We initially ended that urban section at Oak and then carried it out to the creek crossing and Griffin. Were you in on that discussion?

A: (Phil Odegard) Originally the urban section was anticipated to go out to Oak Street. After we went through the process called "Alignment and Grade" it was determined that should actually extend out to the bridge crossing. Based on the character and cost and other things, it was determined that we could go to a mixed use trail on the east side of that bridge to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists… (inaudible) … and carry that sidewalk all the way to Story Mill. So the decision was made to end that sidewalk section at the East Fork and go with a mixed use trail offset from the roadway beyond that.

A: (Darryl James) The short answer is it was based on land uses and cost.

Q: (Tim Kearns) Do you have right-of-way to accommodate that?

A: (Darryl James) That wasn't the issue – it was adjacent land uses and cost.

Q: (Mary Ann Nielson) My question is about trees – will you be cutting any down and will you be planting any?

A: (Darryl James) The projection is somewhere around the order of 100 plus trees would be cut down and those could be from small shrubs and trees along the existing alignment to some fairly bigger trees. Trees would be replanted in the boulevards.

A: (Phil Odegard) We understand that trees are a big issue; they always are in an urban corridor. Right now with the Preferred Alternative, a lot of the mature trees end up in the boulevard. The City of Bozeman has volunteered the use of their Arborists as part of the next phase. They are going to go through and do a tree survey and a tree inventory and determine the health of the existing trees. As we get into the final design, we can talk to the property owners more on a one-on-one basis and there will be some opportunities as part of the right-of-way negotiations process to maybe meander the sidewalk, if you

would like to preserve that tree, and allow the sidewalk to encroach further into the property; we can do something like that. Other alternatives would be to use an alternate sidewalk surfacing material to protect the roots so that when we do put the sidewalks through, we don't kill the trees. The Department and the City are very sensitive to this issue, and we are going to have that as part of the next process and try and preserve as many as possible. The one thing we do need to make sure of though is that those trees are healthy; the arborists will help do that. We don't want to perpetuate a potential safety problem with a dead or decaying tree that is going to blow over and possibly injure a person or property.

A: (Darryl James) As always, cost is a consideration as well.

Q: (Robert Banis) I own property at 1602 North Rouse. I downloaded your study and read it – A B C D, the plan B with the roundabout, and you analyzed and scrutinized all four of those plans, I can see that. All four of those plans end the sidewalk at Bond and it continues a bike and pedestrian path from Bond to Griffin. Since I live in that area I can tell you that riding a bicycle or walking there is patently dangerous right now. It is a very poor situation and I strongly support a pedestrian and bicycle path. But I'm wondering all of a sudden in the Preferred Alternative, which is none of the above – it's not A B C or D – where the sidewalk and the Boulevard came since it's running through basically an industrial area, and your intersections were all marked out with the exception of the biggest bottleneck in the whole route which is the intersection of I-90, the railroad track, and North Rouse. I'd like to know where the sidewalk came from continuing and what will you do about that bottleneck – the worst place on the whole road.

A: (Darryl James) They are carrying the bike lanes and sidewalk underneath the structure. Again the initial intent was to stop the sidewalks at Bond but through public involvement and public input, especially with the City, it was determined it would make sense, based on existing and projected land uses, to go on ahead and carry that out to the creek also.

Q: (Robert Banis) What will you do about that big bottleneck? That is a dangerous place to go to. I've ridden my bicycle through there every day to work and it's not any fun.

A: (Darryl James) As far as the railroad crossing, the new crossing, and the street with the bike lanes and with the new surfacing, it will be designed to accommodate bicycles. The overpass structure is also scheduled for reconstruction, the distance between bridge piers (or columns) will be increased and not present such a constraint or bottleneck in that area.

A: (Phil Odegard) A lot of the constraint with the railroad and the backups were due in part because the intersection at Oak and Rouse was near capacity or over capacity. With this project we will interconnect the railroad signal with the street signal so they'll be able to coordinate with the green time and the red time when trains are crossing. So that should enhance the operation of both those intersections and improve that.

Q: (Suzanne Berbet) I live at 808 North Rouse. I live just south of the Tamarack and Rouse intersection, on the east side. I live in Zone 4 which is on the map over here, and you guys have eliminated the on-street parking. I live in a block that doesn't have any off-street parking and that is too narrow for off-street parking. What do you suggest happens if you eliminate the parking? I obviously have more than one car and I'm not sure where I'd park.

A: (Darryl James) We recognize that as a major issue. In the Environmental Assessment we talked about three different options that could be used to address that kind of a problem. One is to compensate the landowner by either installing a driveway and a parking pad on your parcel. If you don't have room for that, there will be residential acquisitions in the corridor. The Department of Transportation will look at the availability of those types of parcels and putting in basically an off-street parking lot and reserving that for exclusive use of residences that don't have the ability to put parking on their lot. So potentially some compensation, installation of a driveway or parking pad on your lot, the possibility of off-street parking somewhere in close proximity for your exclusive use – those are the three options that we are offering.

Q: (Suzanne Berbet) What's considered to be proximity?

A: (Darryl James) That is based on the availability of those lots. We're not going to tear down a house to put in a parking lot but if an adjacent resident or somebody two or three doors down is acquired, and again this is part of right-of-way negotiation process, and what that compensation would be like and whether it is an acceptable solution. I can't tell you what those specifics would look like or what would remedy your loss of parking. As we get further along in the design process we will get into that.

Q: (Hiller Higman) I didn't understand from Lamme to Bozeman Creek, is there parking on the road or not? Is that going to be eliminated?

A: (Darryl James) From Lamme to Bozeman Creek we are not going to have parking from there north. Again that is something we can look at when we get down to a more refined design and there could be some parking accommodated, but right now in comparing the alternatives, just to make everything equal, there is no parking.

Q: (Hiller Higman) I missed the part about 10 feet … (inaudible) … How do they determine how they negotiate it or not?

A: (Darryl James) You determine that during right-of-way negotiations. The Department of Transportation will talk with you about the right-of-way that is required and through that process we will discuss whether you want to pull out …. (inaudible) … and whether they will agree to that.

Q: (Christopher Spegis) I would like a little bit of clarification as to how it was determined to stop the urban cross section at the bridge rather than at eastern edge of the Boys and Girls Club which is obviously very urban?

A: (Darryl James) Again it was based on cost, existing and projected land uses. We're getting repeated questions; we'll respond to that in detail in the FONSI. That is the answer we gave before. We can't provide everything for everybody – there are physical constraints, there are cost constraints. There will be a response in the FONSI to that question.

Q: (Peter Uka) I live on Story Mill Road. I have three questions – the stream, the roadway crosses Bozeman Creek twice and Bozeman Creek floods the roadway right above both stream crossings. So I want to know what the plan is for flooding. The second question is the speed limits and traffic light timing. Will those be lights that are linked together so if you're driving the speed limit, you can make it all the way to Main Street without stopping for lights? The third question is street lighting and dark skies – that has to make sense with current regulations.

A: (Darryl James) The three crossings we've got – Bozeman Creek crossing and then the East Fork and the crossing on Peach Street, all of those during the final design would be designed to the appropriate flow capacity. We've not done that at this level. We do about a 30% design to get it through the Environmental Assessment, so we've not done detailed hydraulic analysis. I think a fair amount has been done on these just because of the importance ... the whole corridor is in a flood plain. How much has been done on that?

A: (Phil Odegard) We have developed a Hec-Raz level to model Bozeman Creek. Per the current design it will match what the flooding limits are now. We are looking at the possibility of removing a private bridge; if we can remove that private bridge that will reduce the 100 year flood zone through that segment. We need, as part of this process, to get approval for this project … we can't make it worse than it is now. So we are confident with the modeling that's been done, it will be the same or better than it is now.

A: (Darryl James) I don't know of a project that we work on that speed limits don't come up. The Montana Department of Transportation does not set speed limits. The Legislature sets the speed limit. The Transportation Commission has a process to look at speed limits. Signal timing . . . Obviously the intent of Rouse Avenue is to carry traffic as efficiently as possible so we will look at signal timing to make sure that constant flow can make it through the corridor without stopping for lights – that is the intent of an arterial like this. Lighting – I'm not sure about the street lighting.

A: (Phil Odegard) Right now we do not have continuous street lighting with the improvements. There will be street lights at the intersections that are signalized but right now street lights aren't part of the project. You also mentioned dark skies – any street lights that are installed at intersections will not come out … (inaudible) … so we are not illuminating the night sky. We are trying to minimize that; we will try and minimize the throw of light onto adjacent residents as well so we are just lighting the pedestrian and vehicle areas of the intersections.

Q: (Debra DeBode) I live on North Montana Avenue at approximately Peach. I'm wondering if you have a general timeframe for start and finish of the project and I'm wondering about detours and disruption during the project.

A: (Darryl James) It depends. Project costs have been escalating over the last couple of years. Federal transportation dollars are more and more limited. Federal gas tax receipts are down, so most of the Department's current projects have been pushed out several years. The earliest projected start date for this project is somewhere around 2012 or longer. So the very earliest is somewhere around 2012 and it's probably going to be pushed out even further than that. Construction phasing and sequencing are all kind of final design type issues. Obviously with a route like this we are going to try and maintain traffic as much as possible through the corridor. The Department of Transportation is committed to maintaining business and residential access throughout construction. We've not taken those details through this Environmental Assessment phase; they will be addressed through final design. At some of our very first public meetings on this project we heard quite a bit about the utility work in this corridor. So it's several years out and the MDT is committed to maintaining business and residential access as much as possible.

Q: (Krystina Ward) I live just up the street. I travel Peach and Rouse frequently after work and for banking needs up on Main Street. I'm wondering about the lighting going in on Peach, is it going to be on both sides of Rouse, both on Peach's side and opposite that? When the traffic signal goes in, is there going to be both on Rouse on the Peach side and opposite that?

A: (Darryl James) Yes, the idea is to reconfigure the Peach intersection so that it actually winds up better and that whole intersection would be signalized.

Q: (Krystina Ward) Because now that is a four-way and people coming off the Ellis area from that side, people coming down Peach and then people on Rouse … trying to figure out who has the right-of-way is a little bit messy.

A: (Darryl James) That is what we want to do, try and correct that intersection both for realignment and signalization.

Q: (Christopher Spegis) You said that the project has been pushed out to 2012, a few years ago when Rouse was repaved after the sewer project went in back in 2005, we were talking about the day when anything is done we need to have something done immediately to make this route safe for bicycles. When we heard it was going to be 2010, we said we could wait for that. Now it's 2012. What is the Department planning

to do for bicycle safety until this project gets going? It's extremely dangerous out there right now and the further it gets pushed out, the more chance there is for impacts for the bicycling community.

A: (Darryl James) Understood. That's one of the main purposes of this project, to provide an adequate facility for bicycles, but the funding is just not here. There is no way the Department could do something even in the interim because of funding and because of the wasted dollars in providing an interim improvement and then tearing it up in five or ten years. So it really does come down to funding constraints.

Q: (Christopher Spegis) It was just done and then it was repaved.

A: (Darryl James) But it would have been torn up. So it is a waste of taxpayer dollars to put in an interim improvement and then know that you're going to rip it up later.

Q: (Jerry Morrison) 1520 North Rouse at the intersection of Bond and Rouse. With the preferred plan, how much more additional right-of-way are you going to take on each side of the street?

A: (Darryl James) It's going to vary throughout the corridor.

Q: (Jerry Morrison) Ok, at that particular area, the intersection of Rouse and Bond.

A: (Darryl James) I'm not sure I can answer that question with any degree of specificity. We've got some plans here and you can talk to Tony.

Q: (Jerry Morison) What we're seeing on the photographs, is that very close to scale?

A: (Darryl James) It's a rough representation. Again Tony will have some more detailed plans and you can sit down with him and look at those. But again these are preliminary plans, they are not final, they are not detailed, but it will give you some estimation.

Q: (Suzy Berbet) We talked about the right-of-way … with construction to be set in 2012, when will the right-of-way negotiations start with the homeowners?

A: (Darryl James) Typically the next phase is to move into Final Design and then once those plans are set, we start the right-of-way negotiation process. That can take somewhere around a year or more and then you move into construction after that. So if we were to start this in 2012, probably somewhere in the 2010-2011 period we would start right-of-way negotiations. Again it is likely this project will be pushed out even further.

Q: (Suzy Berbet) Ok, then my next question of concern is if you are a homeowner on Rouse and are considering selling your house in the next few years, who's going to buy our house if they don't know what's going to happen to this street? What can we do as homeowners? We can't really protect ourselves, we are kind of stuck with these houses until this construction starts because we don't know.

A: (Darryl James) Well not the construction…this Environmental Assessment lays out fairly well what you're looking at regarding acquisition and distance from back of sidewalk. So this is kind of planning tool for you, the City, and the Department of Transportation over the next several years. That's the intent of this process – public disclosure. So this is a pretty good estimate of what's coming. But that final right-of-way acquisition figure won't be finalized, depending on project funding, for another two years. But this is a good guide.

Q: (Suzy Berbet) Then I'm going to give you a specific example. In Zone Four you have a 64-foot area and in order to go up to my front porch, it would be 75 feet. So I essentially have 11 feet between your proposed roadway without parking and then 11 feet to my front porch. So if I don't have parking right there, and you had said it is within five feet of your front porch to have a right-of-way negotiation, can I say that essentially my house ... I would negotiate to essentially have to sell my house because I don't have any parking?

A: (Darryl James) I wasn't saying that the ones that are in complete conflict, or the ones that are 0-5 would be complete acquisitions and nothing else. If you have right-of-way acquired and it changes the usability of that parcel then that is something you would negotiate with MDT's Right-of-Way Bureau. I can't say that it is within this category or this category and is or isn't a take, it's entirely up to the right-of-way negotiation process. I think there are some brochures that explain that process and how it works. If you've got more detailed questions, don't hesitate to ask MDT staff afterwards.

Q: (Michael Shafer) I live at 540 North Rouse. I'm the second house off the southeast corner which you said there are only two houses being eliminated. I assume it is the corner house, what's the other house? Mine?

A: (Darryl James) Yes it is yours. The two homes there in the southeast quadrant.

Q: (Ralph Zimmer) Please do not jump to the conclusion that I'm implying anything over critical, but in the first part of this evening it was twice stated that you met with both bike and ped groups. Would you please identify the ped groups that you met with?

A: (Darryl James) I don't remember who even established the list … the City helped us identify groups to speak with. Does anyone remember the specific groups we talked with?

A: (Phil Odegard) We can look those up for you Dr. Zimmer.

Q: (Catherine Schneider) I'm a bicyclist and an automobile driver on Rouse. One question as an automobile driver, can you synchronize the lights please along the route? Where are the rumble strips? Will there be rumble strips? Is it possible to separate those between the bike path and the automobile traffic? I'm assuming that 16 year olds can ride their bikes on the sidewalks, is there anything that can be done for adults that want to ride bikes but are terrified to ride in traffic? Is it a possibility to have traffic signals for automobiles, pedestrians, and bicyclists? And why the use of … what's the difference between concrete and asphalt? Just the sidewalks I've noticed around town look like they need a lot of maintenance, and I wonder if it would be cheaper or better in the long run to do pavement or asphalt sidewalks?

A: (Phil Odegard) That was a lot of questions. Rumble strips – in the urban section MDT is not going to install rumble strips. So we will not have rumble strips within the limits of these improvements. At the signalized intersections, you can set up detection for bicyclists. With the signal practice now, MDT is pretty much going to video detection, they can set up video detection zones for bikes to recognize bicycle traffic at those intersections. As far as allowing adults to ride on the sidewalks, that's something that this project can't address – that kind of code; that's beyond the realm of what we're doing as far as this design. Asphalt versus concrete – a lot of that is based on maintenance and cost. Typically for sidewalks in urban areas, they are predominately cement, concrete, and pavement and they typically have a longer life than asphalt or plant mix. So that is why we're going with concrete sidewalks; that is the standard practice.

Q: (Julie Maxwell) The block on Rouse between Peach and Cottonwood, the only change as I understand it is there would be no on-street parking?

A: (Darryl James) Correct.

Q: (Julie Maxwell) Nothing else would be changed?

A: (Darryl James) Well there's going to be a change in the roadway, so you will have a center turn lane. So it will have two lanes; one lane in each direction and a center turn lane. You'll have a bike lane on each side, curb and gutter, a boulevard, and then the sidewalk.

Q: (Julie Maxwell) But it will keep the same curb and the same boulevard?

A: (Darryl James) As the proposed? From the first cross section with bike lanes, curb and gutter, sidewalk, boulevards, the only thing that would be taken out in that section is the on-street parking.

Q: (Julie Maxwell) Right. So curbs would stay the same?

A: (Darryl James) Not as existing, no. It's going to be wider than existing.

Q: (Julie Maxwell) So you are taking part of the boulevard?

A: (Darryl James) Yes.

Q: (Julie Maxwell) How much?

A: (Darryl James) If you've got a specific residence, we can look at the distance from your residence, but I can't give you a distance that we're taking, I don't have that information.

PUBLIC HEARING

(**Darryl James**) We are going to move into the formal Hearing portion of this evening. Keep in mind that we've got a couple of critical decisions to make. One, does the proposed project, this Preferred Alternative, does it meet Purpose and Need? Are the Alternatives fairly considered? Did we look at all these Alternatives equally and fairly and does it accurately represent the public involvement and public input that we had? Are the impacts significant? If we do have substantive impacts or significant impacts we have to look at whether can we actually mitigate those impacts. Those are what we're considering as we move forward and your input helps guide some of this decision. Again to restate – if through this process we determine that the impacts are significant and they can't be mitigated, we have to move into an Environmental Impact Statement. If the impacts are not significant or we can mitigate some of those impacts, the Federal Highway Administration and Montana Department of Transportation will sign a Finding of No Significant Impact and the project would move forward into final design and right-of-way acquisition and construction.

At this point we want to take formal comments. We won't respond to those this evening but they'll be transcribed and included in a FONSI if we move that direction, with a formal response issued by the Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

(**Paul Grant**) If you raise your hands and will bring you the microphone to you and we'll make sure everybody gets their comment in. Please be considerate of others as far as the length of your comment so everybody gets an opportunity to talk.

Com: (**Christopher Spegis**) I have several comments. I certainly appreciate the proposed Preferred Alternative. The urban cross section, I believe, should be carried further than the proposed crossing with the Creek to include the Boys and Girls Club as it is now established and obviously the benefits would be great for the children peddling their bicycles to the Boys and Girls Club.

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Regarding the current structure of the road – a few years ago the roadway was torn up and reconstructed narrower than it previously was before the new sewers went in which made it extremely dangerous for bicyclists in that area when the sewer construction took place north of Oak. I would like to see the Department do something to mitigate the problem that is there right now until they begin construction in what appears to be later than 2012. Thank you.

Res: Funding constraints do not currently allow for a further extension of the urban section to the east. Based on public comment, and the strong preference stated by City Staff, MDT will consider extension of an urban section to Story Mill Road since it will be within the limits cleared under the EA. MDT will work with the City of Bozeman if the project proceeds through final design, and collectively determine whether an urban section would better suit the on-the-ground conditions and is within cost constraints nearer the time of actual implementation.

MDT-Maintenance completed a pavement overlay on Rouse Avenue after the street was torn up for sewer replacement. Since it was an overlay and not a mill and fill (where the top surface is removed and replaced), it resulted in a top surface that is a couple of feet narrower than it was prior to resurfacing. There is still shoulder available for bikes and pedestrians; however, if this project is delayed any further due to funding issues and to the point of requiring another maintenance fix, MDT will consider a mill and fill type project to return the paved surface back to a wider cross-section.

Com: **(Hiller Higman)** 404 North Rouse. We are obviously going to lose a lot of front yard and I just want you guys to keep in mind in the final decision all the families that live in that section through there. It looks like you've done that, and while we're not happy with the decision, we appreciate it. I'm an avid cyclist and spend a lot of time outdoors and never rode along the Creek before and now I do. Thank you.

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Res: MDT and FHWA recognize the value of both the residents and business owners within this corridor, and the importance of the route as a major transportation corridor in and through the community. The NEPA/MEPA process requires that a balanced and objective analysis of all impacts be considered, and it is for this reason that the preliminary design includes minimized travel lane widths, narrowed boulevard and sidewalk widths, and the decision to move forward with a three-lane section rather than a five-lane section as initially proposed.

Com: **(Ted Lange, Gallatin Valley Land Trust Community Trails Program)** We strongly support the bicycle pedestrian facilities proposed throughout the project. One comment is the transition from sidewalk to shared use path, and further consideration about where that transition should occur. As it is well known the end trail head is a huge drop off for people all year around especially during the dry season when there are a lot of bicyclists. If there was trail out to the end you'd have a lot of people bicycling the paved trail; you'd have a lot of people bicycling out there. Gallatin Valley Land Trust is about to open to the public, hopefully next month, another equally fun trail right across the street from the Fish Technology Center, and the Drinking Horse Mountain Trail will probably be an equally big draw to create even more bicycle/pedestrian interest in going out there. So it is our hope that the shared use path is on one or both sides out to the end of the Fish Technology Center. The question is how far should the shared use path come back on

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Rouse? Certainly one could make an argument that it should go to Oak on the east side, so you'd have a connection from the Fairgrounds over to the east side of Oak out to the Fish Technology Center, or perhaps it should go to Creekman and that would work. But I think there should be some more consideration about how far that shared use path should extend in the bigger picture context to get people out to the end and the new Drinking Horse Mountain Tail. Thank you.

Res: See response to Comment "A" regarding the extension of the sidewalks to Story Mill. Extension of a shared use path beyond the established project limits would need to be addressed under a separate project. While the suggestion to extend a shared use path to connect to other planned or existing trails further outside the project limits may have merit, it was not raised during early project scoping, so MDT and FHWA did not establish that aspect in the purpose and need for the proposed improvements and the impacts from such a facility were not explored under the current EA.

Com: Ⓓ (**Charles Swart**) I've been in Bozeman since 1959. I sent a letter to the editor of the Chronicle which they published yesterday; some of you may have seen it. I appreciated it but they did leave out some of the citations I had. I had given the phone number of 444-7228 from which you could order one of these Environmental Assessment books; they have a very pleasant young lady when you call and she'll get it out over night. There are five options which are discussed and I would want to stay with the recommended. As you head north along the street of Rouse Avenue one of the first things you see if the massive 48-inch diameter Cottonwood on the east side of the street. Under this option this tree, along with every other tree within 15-30 feet outside of the existing right-of-way, that's about 125 trees, will be destroyed. There won't be a tree left that you can see. It will be like driving to Belgrade on I-90. All on-street parking would be eliminated along the route including resident parking; that's shown on pages 27-30 in the book. That's all on-street parking. Seventy-eight property ownerships will be affected; that's on page 39. The increase of the right-of-way width would affect, of course, the two houses southeast of Peach and Rouse and additionally there would be more buy-outs because of the proximity to the front steps; that's shown on pages 39-40 in the book. They tell us that if you don't have parking, you can walk down and park your car in some of the lots they are going to buy, and that's reassuring. I close in saying that the construction as proposed will result in a social and city train wreck.

Res: There appear to be three major concerns in this comment: loss of trees, loss of on-street parking, and loss of homes. The following responses take these issues in that order.

In coordination with MDT, the City of Bozeman arborist will conduct an inventory of trees in the corridor and MDT will work with individual property owners and consider options to avoid healthy trees where feasible and appropriate. This may include leaving existing trees that fall within the "boulevard" area, and appear healthy and able to withstand construction activities, or may include designing the sidewalk to meander

farther into a private parcel if the landowner desires protection of the mature vegetation over the loss of additional right-of-way.

Approximately 22 homes would lose on-street parking. Only two (2) of those homes would have no alley access and no ability to accommodate parking on the existing lot. MDT will negotiate with each individual landowner during the right-of-way negotiation process to identify reasonable compensation for the loss of property value attributable to the lost parking.

Final right-of-way limits will not be established until the final design is complete. Right-of-way negotiations would establish an agreeable price for the right-of-way and would begin once the final design is complete and the necessary right-of-way acquisition is identified. The right-of-way negotiation process is projected to take place approximately two years from issuance of this Finding of No Significant Impact. During that phase, each individual property owner will be contacted. Table 3.1 in the EA identified an approximate distance from the back of sidewalk to the existing structures. Only those that were in direct conflict were shown as a complete acquisition, but it is anticipated that if the use and value of a parcel is substantially altered by the proposed project, a full acquisition may be appropriate for those residences as well.

Com: (**Andrew Epple**) 1725 Hillside Lane. I'm speaking as a private citizen. I just wanted to encourage you to continue the full urban section standard all the way out to the end of the project to Story Mill Road. Since the project was originally scoped, certainly the area was more rural at that time, but since then it has become much more urbanized with significant plans for further urbanization especially with the Story Mill development and it's 1,200 plus new residences and commercial development right along that corridor. So I think it is much more appropriate to consider a full urban standard with six foot sidewalks, boulevard, curb and gutter, and bike lanes, rather than the rural section out there to Story Mill. Thank you.

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Res: See response to Comment "A."

Com: (**Robert Banis**) I've owned property on North Rouse since 1980 and travel that route many times. It is my observation and opinion that the recent paving project two years ago which included moving mail boxes and pull outs for the postal service, that the final result of that ended up in a less safe roadway than we had prior to that. The area on the outside of the roadway seems like it was broader, more accessible, and easier to use for pedestrians and bicyclists, and the new pavement is less so and more dangerous. And I would encourage the Department of Transportation to look at that and find some remediation and some correction on one side or the other side of the street because it is going to be a long time before this new project fixes that. All it would take, hopefully,

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would be a strip of asphalt three or four feet wide. Because right now it is more dangerous than it was before the previous project.

Res: MDT-Maintenance completed a pavement overlay on Rouse Avenue after the street was torn up for sewer replacement. Since it was an overlay and not a mill and fill (where the top surface is removed and replaced), it resulted in a top surface that is a couple of feet narrower than it was prior to resurfacing. There is still shoulder available for bikes and pedestrians; however, if this project is delayed any further due to funding issues and to the point of requiring another maintenance fix, MDT will consider a mill and fill type project to return the paved surface back to a wider cross-section.

Com: Ⓖ (**Peter Rugheimer**) I live on Story Mill Road. I agree with Andy Epple that a more formal sidewalk with a boulevard should be continued all the way to Story Mill Road. It would seem funny to have the shared pathway, which is not quite as formal as a boulevard and sidewalk, on the main corridor yet when you go off that into the subdivisions and there are three of them that lie to the north of the road, Bridger Creek Golf Course, Legends, and Creekwood, and all those subdivisions have curb and gutter, sidewalks, and boulevard. So it would seem not to match. I know that was one of your decision criteria for not connecting it all the way to Story Mill Road, but I think it should be reconsidered because right off the main route there is curb and gutter in those subdivisions and you know for sure that new 1,200 unit one that Andy mentioned will have sidewalks, boulevard, and that kind of thing. So the shared use pathway really doesn't make sense and that urban section should go all the way to Story Mill Road.

Res: See response to Comment "A."

Com: Ⓗ (**Ralph Zimmer**) I Chair the Bozeman Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee, which is the official body established jointly by the City, the County, and the School District, to provide input on pedestrian matters. To the best of my recollection we were never asked to meet with you folks and you never asked to meet with us. In part that is a condemnation of us; we should have been more aggressive. But I do want it identified that there has been no contact with our group. In spite of that, I do intend to take this to our next Committee meeting, and we will discuss it and I would expect that we will be providing input by the deadline. Based upon what I know of the Committee and its past actions, I would speculate that it too would probably be urging the continuation of the urban section to the limit of the project.

Res: As a matter or record, the Pedestrian Traffic Safety Committee was requested and attended a project meeting specifically dedicated to pedestrian and bicycle issues and concerns held on June 20, 2006 at the Bozeman City Hall. In addition to MDT, FHWA and consultant staff, attendees included:

Doug McSpadden – *Safe Trails*
Jason Delmue – *Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board*

Ted Lange – *Gallatin Valley Land Trust*
David Baumbauer – *Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board*
Ed Sondeno – *Bozeman Public Schools*
Jon Henderson – *Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board*
David Kunkle – *Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board*
Connie Garrett – *Northeast Neighborhood Association*
Taylor Lonsdale – *Bozeman Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee*

Com: Ⓘ (**Debra DeBode**) 527 North Montana Avenue. I do think from earlier versions I've heard about what you're planning to do, that this embodies some really nice changes for the community, but I do feel for the people who will loose property, and everyone does. I also am very concerned about the urban forest that we now have especially in the area between approximately Lamie and Peach, maybe up to Cottonwood. So I just wonder if the boulevard, while nice, does take out five feet on each side of the road. I know you eliminated part of it because of the Creek, but I just wonder if having the original urban forest might not be preferable in that stretch to adding the boulevard, while obviously nice and pretty, there is just not space there and I wonder if that might alleviate some of the concerns of the homeowners as well and save some trees.

Res: As noted above in response to Comment "D," there will be flexibility in the design that may allow leaving existing trees that fall within the "boulevard" area, and appear healthy and able to withstand construction activities, or may include designing the sidewalk to meander farther into a private parcel if the landowner desires protection of the mature vegetation over the loss of additional right-of-way. These details will be negotiated with each individual property owner.

Com: Ⓙ (**Barry Brown**) My partner Scott Dehlendorf and I have the project at Oak and Rouse on the northwest corner and although we appreciate you acknowledging that you aren't going to tear down our building at the corner of Oak and Rouse, the fact is that it's in the publication and for a couple of weeks provided numerous conversations and consternation, surrounding the report. I guess we would appreciate it, as well as our tenants would appreciate it, since you were the firm that engineered our project, proof read, update, or refine your publication to reflect what's current as opposed what really isn't current. It was a long couple of weeks.

Res: At the time of the drafting of the EA, this site was under redevelopment but the final agreements on the right-of-way requirements at this site were not completed. The project team has been actively coordinating the design with Montana Avenue Partners and, as indicated in the FONSI section entitled "Edits/Corrections to the EA," there are no further property acquisitions required at this site.

Com: Ⓚ **(Brian Metsger)** 314 North Rouse. Besides buyouts I would like to see MDT negotiate with the City to look at alternatives besides buyouts such as flexibility within zoning for the current landowners so that if they have plans, whether it is to sell or improve the property, they have more than just accepting a buyout. Thank you.

Res: Final right-of-way limits will not be established until the final design is complete. This process is projected to take approximately one year from issuance of this Finding of No Significant Impact. Right-of-way negotiations would begin once the final design is complete. During that phase, each individual property owner will be contacted to discuss the necessary right-of-way acquisition and to establish an agreeable price for the right-of-way. Table 3.1 in the EA identified an approximate distance from the back of sidewalk to the existing structures. Only those that were in direct conflict were shown as a complete acquisition, but it is anticipated that if the use and value of a parcel is substantially altered by the proposed project, a full acquisition may be appropriate for those residences as well. All decisions will be made in coordination with the individual property owners.

Com: Ⓛ **(Bill Harston)** 621 Bridger Drive. There are two businesses on North Rouse that have parking, one of them is no longer a problem because they've moved, but it is virtually impossible to back out of parking without backing into the flow of traffic. Have you taken that into consideration or is that just a problem with the businesses? You need to look at that because you cannot back out without going into the flow of traffic and if you widen the road, it's going to be worse. I'm talking about the bread store.

Res: There appears to be ample room at the bread store to maintain parking in front of the store, and not require backing into traffic, even with the proposed improvements. This concern will be kept in mind during final design to determine if modifications in parking or the alignment need to be made to ensure safe access to this business location.

Com: Ⓜ **(Jena Caplette)** Most of my comments I'm going to write in but I do really want to underline the people who have voiced current concern about bicycle safety on the road. My daughter is an adult with a disability and can only ride a bicycle and it terrifies me when she tells me she has ridden somewhere north on Rouse. We live on a dead-end cul-de-sac and it's really a deterrent to go anywhere on a bicycle when there is no safe way to go other than getting off of Rouse and finding another route. So I really appreciate the people who have asked for a more immediate solution.

Res: MDT-Maintenance completed a pavement overlay on Rouse Avenue after the street was torn up for sewer replacement. Since it was an overlay and not a mill and fill (where the top surface is removed and replaced), it resulted in a top surface that is a couple of feet narrower than it was prior to resurfacing. There is still shoulder available for bikes and pedestrians; however, if this project is delayed any further due to funding issues and to

the point of requiring another maintenance fix, MDT will consider a mill and fill type project to return the paved surface back to a wider cross-section.

Com: Ⓝ (**Linda Locke**) 2405 West College, No. 13. When I first came to Bozeman one of the first places my kids and I stopped was at Creekside Park; I absolutely love the area. I feel that if you do widen Rouse then it will destroy the integrity of the neighborhood and the beauty of that area. When Bozeman was first being built, the wealthy built on the south side, the workers built in the north side over by the railroad tracks, and that is still the case and to destroy that neighborhood is going to be destroying a lot of places where people are able to buy houses and live.

Res: The project is intended to improve the integrity of the neighborhood by providing continuous bicycle and pedestrian facility connectivity where none exists today. Two homes are currently anticipated to be full acquisitions from the project, and another six homes would fall within five feet of the back of the proposed sidewalk. Many of the homes in the Rouse Avenue corridor are rental properties, and are likely to continue to remain as such regardless of the right-of-way encroachments.

Com: Ⓞ (**Kathie Callahan**) 702 Bridge Drive. I just wanted to comment that I appreciate the work that was done to protect the affordable housing that is currently on Rouse and I hope that whatever the final decisions are, the Preferred Alternatives looks pretty good, but I'd like to see that affordable housing stays a priority in Bozeman. This is a great neighborhood for a resource of that kind. It's a different kind of value; these may not be expensive homes but they are very valuable to Bozeman and to Bozeman's workforce and that you keep them livable and safe. Thank you.

Res: MDT will negotiate with each individual property owner during final design and right-of-way acquisition with the intent to minimize the number of residential acquisitions. With regard to the availability of affordable housing in the area, the EA notes the MLS listings for Bozeman as of October 2008, and the fact that there were 16 homes listed in the Bozeman area, and 80 in the greater Bozeman area in the same price range as those impacted within the Rouse Avenue corridor.

Com: Ⓟ (**Christopher Spegis**) One comment I have is regarding the bike lanes that are established around town and the proposed bike lane, I myself find that if a bike lane is not properly maintained, i.e., swept of the gravel that the cars knock off the main roadway into the bike path, I have a tendency not to ride on that glass and gravel and what not, and ride closer into the street. So if there is any possible way that the Department of Highways could sweep the bike lanes, that would certainly make them much more usable. I also would hope that in the course of coming up with the funding for the overall project, that money be set aside for proper irrigation of trees in the boulevard strip and that the planting of trees be part of the whole entire project and not be put off to some later date. I think that should be included as conditions warrant planting of trees.

Res: MDT will sweep the roadway surface including parking lanes and bike lanes. MDT could make accommodations in the new project to put PVC sleeves under the sidewalk to allow for residents to install sprinkler systems or hoses to water the boulevard and trees. MDT will include discussion of tree maintenance in an agreement with the City of Bozeman. According to Bozeman Ordinances, the city owns the boulevard trees but the residents are responsible to maintain them. The city collects a street tree maintenance tax from residents.

Com: Ⓠ **(Krystine Ward)** Will the mobile home park and the residences around it, and some of the streets breaking off of Rouse … with traffic flow being what it is on some of those streets at rush hour between Seventh and Rouse, I just hope that people will realize that there is a school right across the street from us that it also serves more than the school, the bike path. There is a bike park there and … (inaudible)… and I hope that people will remember there are stop signs on Fifth and to please be a little more observant when they travel with vehicles because that has not currently been paid much attention to. There are residents there, there are children there, please we ask the traffic be a little more mindful when they are coming off at rush hour … (inaudible) … whether it is congested or not, please just watch … (inaudible) …

Res: Your concerns for bicycle and pedestrian safety are noted, and it is anticipated that safety levels for all users of the Rouse Avenue corridor will be improved by this project.

Com: Ⓡ **(Sharon Nelson)** 314 North Rouse. Rouse Avenue proposals should also include a proposal for a new road from Highland to Oak. Without this spot there is no way to predict flow as Bozeman and the surrounding area increase. Without thinking of the additional street arterial, Rouse must take all of the flow. Because of this people will lose homes and the whole street will be devalued by high traffic, higher speed, and extreme width in an area which has some of the oldest homes in Bozeman. Both the State and the City must work together to allow this corridor to exist by adopting a plan where both streets take some of the traffic flow without ruining Rouse Avenue. Thank you.

Res: It was initially envisioned that five-lanes may be necessary to accommodate future demand in the Rouse Avenue corridor. After more detailed traffic analysis, and the exploration of intersection improvements, it was determined that three lanes would provide sufficient capacity for the planning horizon and minimize impacts in this corridor. Additional improvements beyond those discussed along Rouse Avenue are not deemed necessary to meet the stated purpose and need, and were not explored in the EA. Additional corridor improvements, extensions, or new construction should be explored through the Bozeman Area Transportation Plan Update process and would need to be evaluated under a future NEPA/MEPA process.

Com: (**Tara .....**) I'm not with an entity. Reading this brochure "Questions and Answers About Buying Property from Montana Highways" it seems to me, and there may be other information on their website or in the document which I haven't had a chance to completely read through, that this Right-of-Way Bureau needs to have some infrastructure in place now for people to begin having discussion with this Right-of-Way Bureau, if for nothing else to make us feel a little better.

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Res: Any member of the public is welcome to contact the Montana Department of Transportation at any time during the project development process. You may visit the Bozeman Area Office located at 907 North Rouse Avenue, or call the office at 556-4700 (TTY: 800.335.7592). No detailed right-of-way information is available at this time, and MDT anticipates it will be approximately two years from the completion of this FONSI before right-of-way negotiations will be completed.

CLOSING

(**Darryl James**) Are there any other comments? Then we will close the Formal Hearing at this point. I want to remind you that there are several other opportunities to provide your comments in writing. There are comment sheets in the back. If you didn't sign in when you came in, please sign in when you leave. You can leave comments on the website; you can also go to this website and find the Environmental Assessment electronically. I do have additional copies of the Environmental Assessment if anyone wants one tonight, and you're more than welcome to those. You can also call Jeff Ebert and his phone number is up here; mail in your comments to that address. There are some post cards in the back that list the public viewing locations of the Environmental Assessment. Please have your comments to us on or before September 18th. Thank you all for coming, we appreciate your interest in the project and your comments. Thank you.

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
Bob Arnold	605 N ROUSE	581-0304	
Pam		581-1691	pam@GVFC1.com
Don Woodland	379 Mountain Lion dr	586-1633	
Will Tangen	MDT-Helena	444-9251	
AMANDA RICKER	Chronicle		aricker@dailychronicle.com
SAM HARALDSON	509 S 20TH APT D	406/249-6841	samh@samh.net
DUSTIN WORKMAN	1111 RESEARCH DR.	587-2781	dworkman@hyaliteeng.com
Dustin Elmore/HyaliteEng.	" "	" "	delmore@hyaliteeng.com
Sharon Nelson	5100 Bozeman Trail Rd.	587-8656	smnelson@imt.net
Brian Stoppel	2340 Butch Cassidy Dr	587-0566	bstoppelmfs@msn.com
Eddie Steinhauer	410 E Story St Boz	580-1486	eddie@mccow[illegible] Company.com
Maurice S. Quanbeck	1010 N. Rouse	587-5506	
ED REISER	406 Bogert Pl	587-1782	
Ralph Zimmerman	703 So Tracy	586-9152	
Frank Manseau	415 Sir Arthur Dr	587-7769	

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
Bill Harston	621 Bridger Dr	587-6280	—
Jeff Patten /FHWA	585 Shepherd way Helena		
John Newton	214 N Rouse	451-9634	
Mary Newton	214 N Rouse		
Sarah Newton	214 N. Rouse		
Mary Noyes	422 Garnet Mnt Way	539-6041	
Bill Johnson	315 N Rouse	586 5517	
Gabe Priebe	2701 Prospect	444-5446	MDT
Deb Wambach	2701 Prospect	444-0461	MDT
Ben Lloyd	109 N. Rouse #1	585-1112	ben@commaq.com
Tom + Betty Baker	508 N. Willson	586-9672	
Chris Ward	3621 7th Ave S Great Falls	761-0702	
Sue Stodola	COB Eng Dept	582-2280	
Josh Fairchilds	POB 1431 59771		joshfairchilds@yahoo.com

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
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ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
Catherine Schneider	908 S. Tracy	600-8628	catherine.schneider@bresnan.net
Deborah McAfee	2755 Rusty Nail Rd	587-5028	
Anne Swart	324 S. Grand	586-2623	
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Matthew Jesperson	318 N Rouse Ave	522 0877	
MARY CLOUD AMMONS	503 N. BOZEMAN AVE	600-0301	mcammons@gmail.com
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JAMES CONNOLLY	716 MEAGHER AVE	539-4073	JCONNOLLY@HYALITEENG.COM
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Krystina Prinzing Ward	815 5TH Ave. North Lots mail 19, 20 Bozeman, MT	586-0630	

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

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ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

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CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

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Dan Center	615 N Montana		dancenter@gmail.com
JON HENDERSON • COURTNEY W.	411 S. 10th Ave.	522-7130	jhenderson@bozeman.net
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Tara Martin			

ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Public Hearing
August 27, 2008

Please Sign In:

Name and/or Agency	Address	Phone	E-mail
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Appendix C – Media Outreach for EA and Public Hearing

Montana Department of Transportation
MDT
serving you with pride

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

Rouse Avenue - Bozeman - Environmental Assessment

Beginning August 4, 2008, the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 4(f) Evaluation will be available for public review and comment. The Preferred Alternative identified in the EA includes elements that best satisfy the need for the project while minimizing impacts. The proposed action is the reconstruction and widening of approximately 1.95 miles of Rouse Avenue/Bridger Drive from Main Street to Story Mill Road in Bozeman. The proposed project would provide necessary safety and capacity improvements for vehicular and non-motorized travel within the corridor. The Preferred Alternative has two travel lanes, a center turn lane, bike lanes, curb/gutter, and sidewalk, as well as new traffic control at key intersections.

Review the EA at:
- Bozeman Public Library (626 East Main Street)
- Bozeman City Hall (411 East Main Street)
- Renne Library - MSU Bozeman (1 Centennial Mall)
- MDT Bozeman Area Office (907 North Rouse)
- MDT Butte District Office (3751 Wynne) - Butte
- MDT Headquarters, Environmental Services Office (2701 Prospect Ave.) - Helena
- Online at www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml
- Call MDT Environmental Services at (406) 444-7228 for a copy

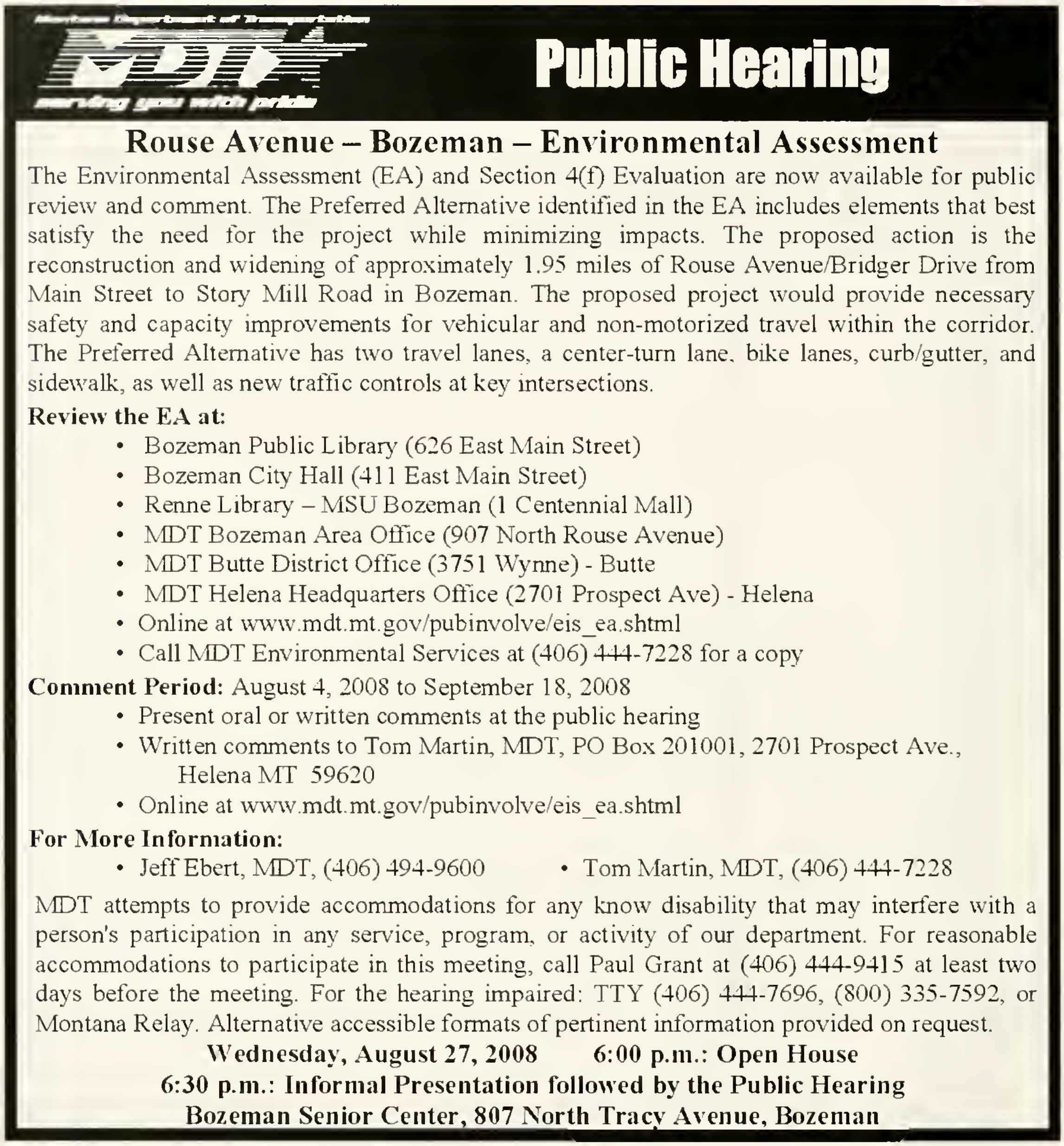
Comment Period: August 4, 2008 to September 18, 2008
- Present oral or written comments at the public hearing
- Written comments to Tom Martin, MDT, PO Box 201001, 2701 Prospect Ave., Helena MT 59620
- Online at www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml

For More Information:
- Jeff Ebert, MDT, (406) 494-9600
- Tom Martin, MDT, (406) 444-7228

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's participation in any service, program, or activity of our department. For reasonable accommodations to participate in this meeting, call Paul Grant at (406) 444-9415 at least two days before the meeting. For the hearing impaired: TTY (406) 444-7696, (800) 335-7592, or Montana Relay at 711. Alternative accessible formats of pertinent information provided on request.

Wednesday, August 27, 2008
6:00 p.m.: Open House
6:30 p.m.: Informational Presentation followed by the Public Hearing
Bozeman Senior Center, 807 North Tracy Avenue, Bozeman

Notice of Availability published in Bozeman Chronicle - Sunday, August 3 , and in the Belgrade News - Tuesday, August 5.



Public Hearing

Rouse Avenue – Bozeman – Environmental Assessment

The Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 4(f) Evaluation are now available for public review and comment. The Preferred Alternative identified in the EA includes elements that best satisfy the need for the project while minimizing impacts. The proposed action is the reconstruction and widening of approximately 1.95 miles of Rouse Avenue/Bridger Drive from Main Street to Story Mill Road in Bozeman. The proposed project would provide necessary safety and capacity improvements for vehicular and non-motorized travel within the corridor. The Preferred Alternative has two travel lanes, a center-turn lane, bike lanes, curb/gutter, and sidewalk, as well as new traffic controls at key intersections.

Review the EA at:

- Bozeman Public Library (626 East Main Street)
- Bozeman City Hall (411 East Main Street)
- Renne Library – MSU Bozeman (1 Centennial Mall)
- MDT Bozeman Area Office (907 North Rouse Avenue)
- MDT Butte District Office (3751 Wynne) - Butte
- MDT Helena Headquarters Office (2701 Prospect Ave) - Helena
- Online at www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml
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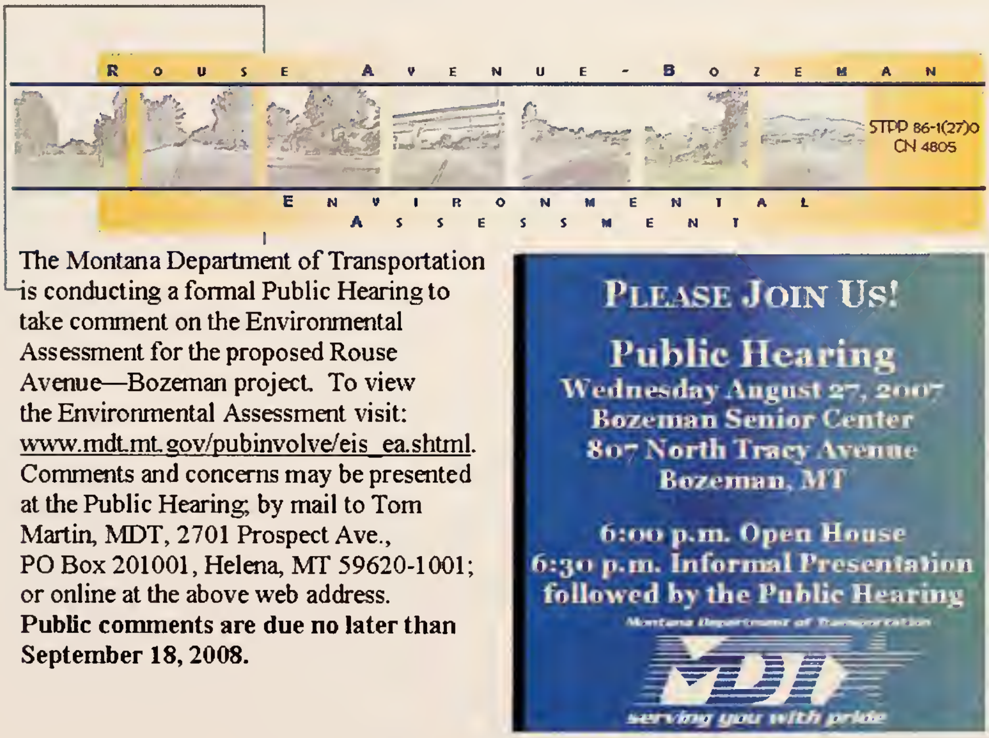
Bozeman Senior Center, 807 North Tracy Avenue, Bozeman

Public Hearing Notice published in the Bozeman Chronicle - Sundays, August 10 and August 24, and in the Belgrade News - Fridays, August 15 and August 22.

Press Releases:
Press Releases for Notice of Availability were sent to the Bozeman Chronicle and Belgrade News and other media outlets via e-mail on Tuesday, August 5 and distributed at the media outlet's discretion.

Press Releases for Notice of Hearing were sent to the Bozeman Chronicle and Belgrade News and other media outlets via e-mail on Monday, August 18 and distributed at the media outlet's discretion.

Post Card Notification:
Postcards were sent to approximately 100 individuals who had participated in previous meetings or otherwise requested to receive project mailings.



ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN
STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805
ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT

The Montana Department of Transportation is conducting a formal Public Hearing to take comment on the Environmental Assessment for the proposed Rouse Avenue—Bozeman project. To view the Environmental Assessment visit: www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/eis_ea.shtml. Comments and concerns may be presented at the Public Hearing; by mail to Tom Martin, MDT, 2701 Prospect Ave., PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620-1001; or online at the above web address. **Public comments are due no later than September 18, 2008.**

PLEASE JOIN US!

Public Hearing
Wednesday August 27, 2007
Bozeman Senior Center
807 North Tracy Avenue
Bozeman, MT

6:00 p.m. Open House
6:30 p.m. Informal Presentation
followed by the Public Hearing

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ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Appendix D – Environmental Assessment

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ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT & SECTION 4(F) EVALUATION

July 2008

Montana Department of Transportation
MDT
serving you with pride

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

for

STPP 86-1(30)0

Rouse Avenue - Bozeman

(CN 4805)

in

Bozeman, Montana

This document is prepared in conformance with the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) requirements and contains the information required for an Environmental Assessment under the provisions of ARM 18.2.237(2) and 18.2.239. It is also prepared in conformance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements for an Environmental Assessment under 23 CFR 771.119, and Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act under 23 CFR 771.135.

Submitted pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(c), 49 U.S.C. 303, Sections 75-1-201 & 2-3-104, M.C.A.,

and Executive Orders 11990, 11988, and 12898, by the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

AND THE

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Submitted by: ______________________ Date: 6/25/08
Montana Department of Transportation

Reviewed &
Approved for
Distribution: Jeffrey A Patten Date: 7/10/08
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

The following persons may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

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Jeffrey A. Patten
Operations Engineer
Federal Highway Administration
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Helena, Montana 59601
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Abstract: The proposed action is the reconstruction and widening of approximately 1.95 miles of Rouse Avenue/Bridger Drive from Main Street to Story Mill Road, in Bozeman. The proposed project would provide necessary safety and capacity improvements for vehicular and non-motorized travel within the corridor. The Preferred Alternative has two travel lanes, a center turn lane, bike lanes, curb/gutter, and sidewalk, as well as new traffic control at key intersections.

"MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program or activity of the Department. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request. For further information call (406) 444-7228 or TTY (800) 335-7592, or Montana Relay at 711."

This document may be obtained electronically from the Montana Department of Transportation website at:
www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/cis_ea.shtml
Public comments on this Environmental Assessment may also be submitted at this website address.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project is located on Rouse Avenue and Bridger Drive, along Primary Route 86, an urban minor arterial in the City of Bozeman. The proposed project begins at the intersection of Rouse Avenue and Main Street and extends north approximately 1.37 miles to the intersection of Griffin Drive, where Rouse becomes Bridger Drive. The proposed project continues east on Bridger Drive approximately 0.57 miles to the intersection of Bridger Drive and Story Mill Road. The total length of the proposed action is 1.94 miles.

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve vehicular Level of Service (LOS) and enhance bike and pedestrian travel within the Rouse Avenue corridor.

The existing Rouse Avenue facility fails to meet the desirable level of service of C or better at three of the six major intersections in the corridor. Without improvements, the Level of Service will be at F at these intersections by the design year of 2030.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are inconsistent throughout the corridor. Sidewalks are present in the corridor, but many have deteriorating concrete, and pedestrian routes are discontinuous or nonexistent in some locations. Rouse Avenue currently does not have bicycle lanes and the paved width is inconsistent throughout the corridor.

Alternatives

The following alternatives were developed for the proposed reconstruction and widening of Rouse Avenue.

- **No Build Alternative** – provides only routine maintenance within the existing facility.
- **Alternative A** - three-lane urban section from Mainstreet to Bond and three-lane rural section from Bond to Story Mill Road
- **Alternative B** – three-lane section widened symmetrically from the centerline of the existing alignment except between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek crossing, where the alternative would be widened to the east to avoid impacts to Bozeman Creek. Alternative B is a three-lane urban section to Bond and three-lane rural section north of Bond to Story Mill Road. Alternative B incorporates the same design elements and lane widths as Alternative A.
- **Alternative C** - five-lane urban section from Main to Bond and a five-lane rural section between Bond and Story Mill Road, widened symmetrically from the existing alignment.
- **Alternative D** - three-lane urban section from Main to Bond and a three-lane rural section north of Bond. Roundabouts would be used instead of signals at intersections where signals are warranted. The center turn-lanes are interrupted by medians as they approach the roundabout intersections.

Identification of the Preliminary Preferred Alternative

Alternatives which were developed for the proposed Rouse Avenue project were evaluated based on their ability to meet the stated *Purpose and Need* and on their impacts to the surrounding environment.

Based on the comparison of impacts, and its ability to meet Purpose and Need and provide a balanced approach to the Project Goals, Alternative B refined is forwarded as the Preferred Alternative for improvements in the Rouse Avenue corridor. Under the Preferred Alternative, Rouse Avenue would follow the same alignment as Alternative B to avoid impacts to Bozeman Creek and Creekside Park, but would not include on-street parking or boulevards where impacts could be substantially reduced. The primary elements of this alternative include:

- Three-lane urban section from Main Street to the East Gallatin River crossing northeast of Griffin Drive, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- Three-lane rural section from the East Gallatin River crossing to Story Mill Road, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- On-street parking on east side of the street between Main and Mendenhall, on both sides of the street between Mendenhall and Lamme, and off-street parking north of Lamme
- Sidewalks on both sides of the roadway from Main to the East Gallatin River crossing, (a shared pedestrian/bicycle path would be constructed on the north from the river crossing to Story Mill, but the path on the south would be provided by others concurrent with development of those parcels – See Bicycle and Pedestrian Concerns in Chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion)
- Bike lanes on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall to Story Mill Road
- Boulevard from Mendenhall to Griffin Street, except between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek crossing where boulevards are eliminated to avoid impacts to Bozeman Creek
- Side-street improvements at intersections to accommodate turning movements

Impacts and Mitigation Summary

If the proposed project is approved, the following mitigation measures will be implemented through contract specifications or special provisions:

Land Use / Right-of-Way and Easements / Utilities

Impacts

While the Preferred Alternative is consistent with all current zoning and planning documents, the proposed project would impact four Section 4(f) properties. The proposed improvements would require the relocation of two structures because of widening necessary to improve the intersection capacity at Peach. Two other properties would be affected because the Preferred Alternative would encroach on those properties, though the proposed construction limits may not impact the building themselves.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required for general land use issues.

Farmlands

Impacts

No analysis of farmlands impacts was necessary since this project lies entirely within the urban built-up area of Bozeman.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

Social

Impacts

The Preferred Alternative is expected to have no effect on population growth, demographic composition, or income levels. It is anticipated to improve travel and access.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

Right-of-Way, Easements, and Relocations

Impacts

Right-of-Way would be required throughout much of the corridor to accommodate the proposed improvements. Approximately 1.4 acres of new right-of way would be required which consists of 78 parcels on both sides of the existing alignment. Acquisition of at least two residences and one business would be required under the Preferred Alternative due to direct conflicts between the proposed construction limits and the existing structures. A number of utilities have been identified within this corridor that may be impacted by the new right-of-way limits. These include city water and sewer, electric and telecommunications transmission lines, natural gas and petroleum pipelines, and cable television lines.

Mitigation

All lands needed for right-of-way under the proposed action which are private ownership would be acquired in accordance with both the *Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act* of 1970 and the *Uniform Relocation Act Amendments* of 1987. Any utility relocation would be coordinated with the lines' owners, and done prior to this proposed project's construction. Notifications of service interruptions due to these relocations would be the responsibility of the utility lines' owners.

Economic Conditions

Impacts

Overall, the proposed action would have a positive impact on the area's economic conditions.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

Environmental Justice

Impacts

According to Census data, areas along the Rouse Avenue corridor are characterized by lower incomes, lower rates of homeownership, and older and less valuable housing stock.

Mitigation

The proposed right-of-way acquisitions do not appear to be either low-income or minority owned/occupied properties. Due to the limited number of acquisitions and the nature of these homes and businesses, both the No-Build Alternative and the Build Alternatives would not create disproportionately high and/or adverse impacts on the health or environment of minority and/or low-income populations.

Air Quality

Impacts

It is expected that there would be no appreciable difference in overall MSAT emissions between the alternatives. Overall, the EPA's vehicle and fuel regulations, coupled with fleet turnover, will over time cause substantial reductions that, in almost all cases, will cause MSAT levels to be substantially lower than today.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Impacts

The Preferred Alternative would improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the corridor through the provision of bike lanes and ADA accessible sidewalks throughout the corridor.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

Noise

Impacts

Traffic noise impacts are anticipated at seven receptors under the No Build Alternative and at 13 receptors under the Preferred Alternative.

Mitigation

Traffic noise abatements measures were considered, including modification of the Preferred Alternative, traffic management measures, construction of noise barriers, and the use of quiet pavements. These mitigation measures are not practical or effective for the Rouse Avenue corridor.

Water Quality

Impacts

The East Gallatin River is the discharge body for storm water and is currently on the DEQ's 303(d) list of impaired or threatened waters. The increase in the total surface area of paved road related to widening and reconstruction will increase the rate and quantity of surface water runoff from the roadway.

Mitigation

Storm water systems design for the Preferred Alternative would use Best Management Practices to treat storm water before it enters the East Gallatin River.

Wetlands

Impacts

There are no wetlands within the project area. Bozeman Creek is a perennial "Water of the U.S." as a result of its connection to the East Gallatin River.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required because there are no wetlands within the project site.

Floodplains

Impacts

MDT and the City of Bozeman are currently discussing design options for future water conveyance structures that would improve overall hydraulic function to reduce flood risk. The Preferred Alternative would have no detrimental impact on the flood risk.

Mitigation

Existing hydraulic conditions would be maintained or improved throughout the corridor through the installation of new conveyance structures agreed upon by MDT and the City of Bozeman, and in coordination with resource agencies. Floodplain Development Permit would be required and is available from the City of Bozeman.

Waterbodies, Wildlife Resources, and Habitat

Impacts

There would be minimal impact to wildlife in the area of study based on availability of adjacent habitat.

Mitigation

To prevent direct impacts in the taking of migratory birds, nestlings, or eggs, it is recommended that tree removal occur before or after the nesting season. In order to avoid impacts to spawning fish, fish passage will be maintained and in-stream timing restrictions may recommended by

MFWP. All construction activities are required to comply with the Montana Noxious Weed Law and follow the requirements of the Noxious Weed Management Act.

Threatened/Endangered (T/E) Species

Impacts

The MNHP database reports, threatened, endangered, or proposed plant or animal species do not exist within the Rouse Avenue study area.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

Hazardous Wastes

Impacts

Several LUST sites were identified with in the study area. There is one active site within the corridor which had a well reading above water quality standards benzene. Construction activities on Oak Street, immediately north of the MDT property, yielded soil samples that contained chromium.

Mitigation

A field engineer will be on-site and observe excavations adjacent to the sites of concern in case any contaminated soils are encountered. Special provisions would be written into the construction contract for the proposed project to address handling of contaminated material in the event it is encountered. Additionally, petroleum resistant pipe materials would be utilized in areas where contamination is encountered, as recommended by the Montana DEQ.

Cultural/Archaeological/Historic Resources

Impacts

There are a total of 11 historic sites in the Rouse Avenue Corridor. Three of these sites are potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP as individual sites. Two other sites within the corridor were previously listed.

Mitigation

Sites that are recommended NRHP eligible have been avoided wherever possible. MDT also proposes to delineate the boundaries of the North Rouse Historic District and contribute $5,000 to the Bozeman Historic Preservation Office to prepare documentation for the nomination of the historic district to the NRHP.

Visual

Impacts

Visual impacts in the corridor include a wider roadway and the removal of some mature vegetation parallel to the roadway. Nearly 100 vegetation species and over 30 tree species were identified and inventoried within the corridor. The Preferred Alternative would require construction disturbance and/or new right-of-way of varying widths throughout the corridor. This disturbance area varies between 15 and 30 feet on either side of the existing transportation facilities. It is not possible to identify impacts to specific trees until more detailed plans are developed; however, it is estimated that over 125 trees could be impacted directly due to the construction activities associated with the Preferred Alternative.

Mitigation

The proposed project is anticipated to have an overall positive effect on the visual character of the corridor through the construction of landscaped boulevards through the residential portions; however, there will be a notable loss of large tree cover in the immediate vicinity of the existing roadway. The City of Bozeman's arborist would be consulted during preliminary engineering to evaluate the condition of existing trees and ensure that appropriate consideration is given to trees and reasonable measures are taken to minimize impacts to these resources. The arborist would also be asked to propose potential mitigation strategies for unavoidable impacts to trees within the corridor. According to a June 2006 phone conversation with Elizabeth Galli-Noble, who represents the Bozeman Tree Board, the Board would like to work with MDT to ensure that trees are replanted within the corridor post-construction. The Tree Board has offered to write grants to partially fund the cost of the replanting. To that end, the Tree Board has asked to be kept apprised of project development progress, in advance of construction, to have time to write grants for tree-planting.

Construction

Impacts

Construction activities from the proposed Build Alternatives would cause temporary inconveniences to area residents and businesses. These would occasionally result in longer travel times, detours, temporary closures, and noise and dust due to the use of heavy machinery. These disruptions would occur intermittently throughout the construction period. The existing roadway would remain in use for continued access during the construction process; therefore, traffic interruptions would be minimized.

Mitigation

Asphalt plants and gravel crushers that may be required for roadway construction for any of the alternatives would require air quality permits to be obtained by the contractor. Construction activities are also required to use dust suppression and control measures to minimize short-term impacts related to construction dust.

There would be minor, temporary noise impacts related to construction of any of the alternatives. The project's contractor would be subject to all state and local laws to minimize construction noise by having mufflers on all equipment. Dust control would also be implemented by using either water, or another approved dust-suppressant. During construction, surface water runoff could be contaminated by spills of petroleum products, lubricants, and hydraulic fluid from construction equipment. There would be a spill prevention and emergency containment plan made to provide for mitigation of any impacts related to such spills. In general, BMP's would be used to minimize the effect of sedimentation and/or run-off during the roadway construction periods.

There is potential for short-term water quality impacts due to increased erosion and sedimentation during construction activities. Mitigation of these impacts is achieved through engineering controls, such as grading, revegetation, and various BMP's. These mitigation measures would be included in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to ensure that any impacts are minimal. Field monitoring/oversight would be planned.

Given the volume of traffic and the fully developed residential, retail, and commercial areas along this route, MDT will require a staging and construction sequencing plan to ensure that reasonable access is maintained to all residents and businesses during construction. All advance warning and detour signing would be in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Therefore, construction impacts from any of the proposed Build Alternatives would be minimized.

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List of Supporting Technical Reports

Alignment and Grade Traffic Plans, Rouse Avenue – Bozeman, HKM Engineering Inc., October 2006

Biological Resource Report for Rouse Avenue Bozeman, Land and Water Consulting, December 2005 (Revised and re-submitted by HKM Engineering February 2006)

Bozeman Creek Crossing Type Selection Report, Rouse Avenue – Bozeman, HKM Engineering Inc., October 2006

Cultural Resource Inventory – North Rouse Avenue, Renewable Technologies Incorporated, April 2006

Initial Site Assessment for Hazardous Materials, Noise & Air, HKM Engineering Inc., December 2005

Preliminary Hydraulics Report, Rouse Avenue – Bozeman, HKM Engineering Inc., November 2006

Preliminary Traffic Engineering Report, Rouse Avenue – Bozeman, HKM Engineering Inc., December 2005

Roundabout Operational Analysis, Rouse Avenue – Bozeman, HKM Engineering Inc., July 2006

Signal Warrant Analysis, Rouse Avenue – Bozeman, HKM Engineering Inc., July 2006

Traffic Noise Study – Rouse Avenue Bozeman, Big Sky Acoustics, November 2006

Copies of these reports are available for review at the MDT Bozeman Area Office at:

Montana Department of Transportation
907 North Rouse Avenue
PO Box 1110
Bozeman, MT 58771-1110
Phone: (406) 556-4700 / TTY: (800) 335-7592

Abbreviations and Acronyms

±	Approximately
ac	acre(s)
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
BMP	Best Management Practice(s)
BRR	Biological Resource Report
CADD	Computer Aided Design and Drafting
COE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality
DNRC	Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
EA	Environmental Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ft	foot (feet)
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
Hwy	Highway(s)
LOS	Level of Service
mi	mile(s)
MDT	Montana Department of Transportation
MFWP	Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
MNHP	Montana Natural Heritage Program
MPDES	Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
MRIS	Montana Rivers Information System
MSATs	Mobile Source Air Toxics
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SPA	Stream Protection Act
T/E	Threatened and Endangered
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey

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1.0 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

This chapter provides a summary description of the project area and the proposed action by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). This chapter also provides a definition of the specific purpose of the proposed project and the need for the proposed improvements.

1.1 Proposed Action

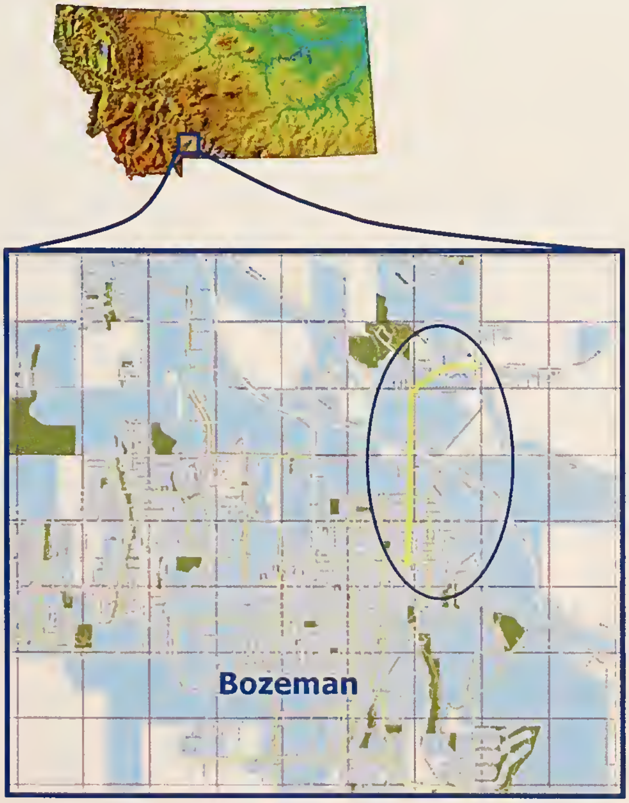
The proposed action is a capacity improvement project on Rouse Avenue and a portion of Bridger Drive within the City of Bozeman. The work would include widening of the roadway, turn-bays at major intersections, boulevards, sidewalks, handicap-accessible ramps, curb and gutter, signing and pavement markings, and facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.

1.2 Project Area Description

As illustrated in Figure 1-1, the proposed project is located in Gallatin County, in the northeastern portion of the City of Bozeman, within the following legal description:

Township(s)	Range	Section(s)
2 S	6 E	7
1 S	6 E	31

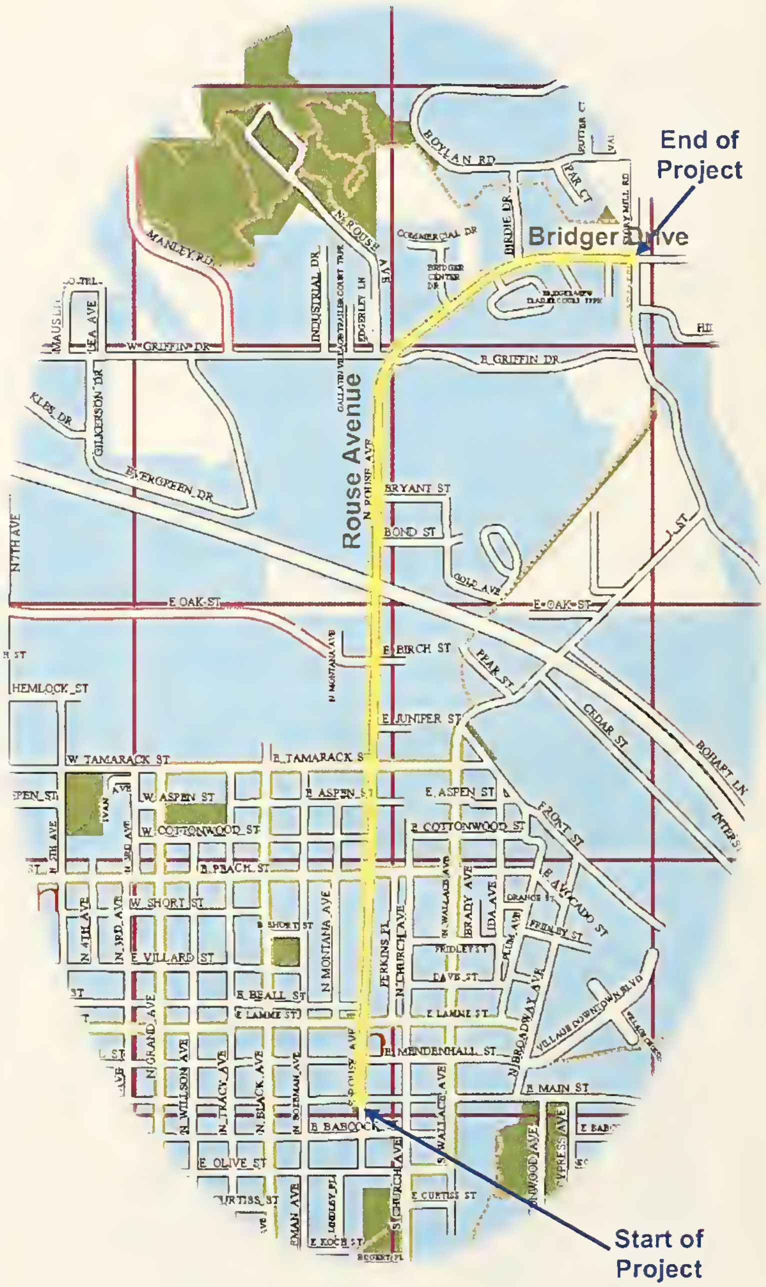
Figure 1-1
Project Location Map



As further illustrated in Figure 1-2, the proposed project is located on Rouse Avenue and Bridger Drive, along Primary Route 86 (P-86) in Bozeman, an MDT urban minor arterial. The proposed project begins at the intersection of Rouse Avenue and Main Street (P-50) at Mile Post 0.00 and extends north approximately 1.37 miles on Rouse Avenue to the intersection of Griffin Drive, where Rouse becomes Bridger Drive. The proposed project then continues east on Bridger Drive approximately 0.57 miles to the intersection of Bridger Drive and Story Mill Road at MP 1.94 for a total project length of approximately 1.94 miles.

The proposed project is contained entirely within the Bozeman City Limits.

Figure 1-2
Proposed Project Limits



1.3 Purpose of the Proposed Action

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve vehicular Level of Service (LOS) and enhance bike and pedestrian travel within the Rouse Avenue corridor.

1.4 Need for the Proposed Action

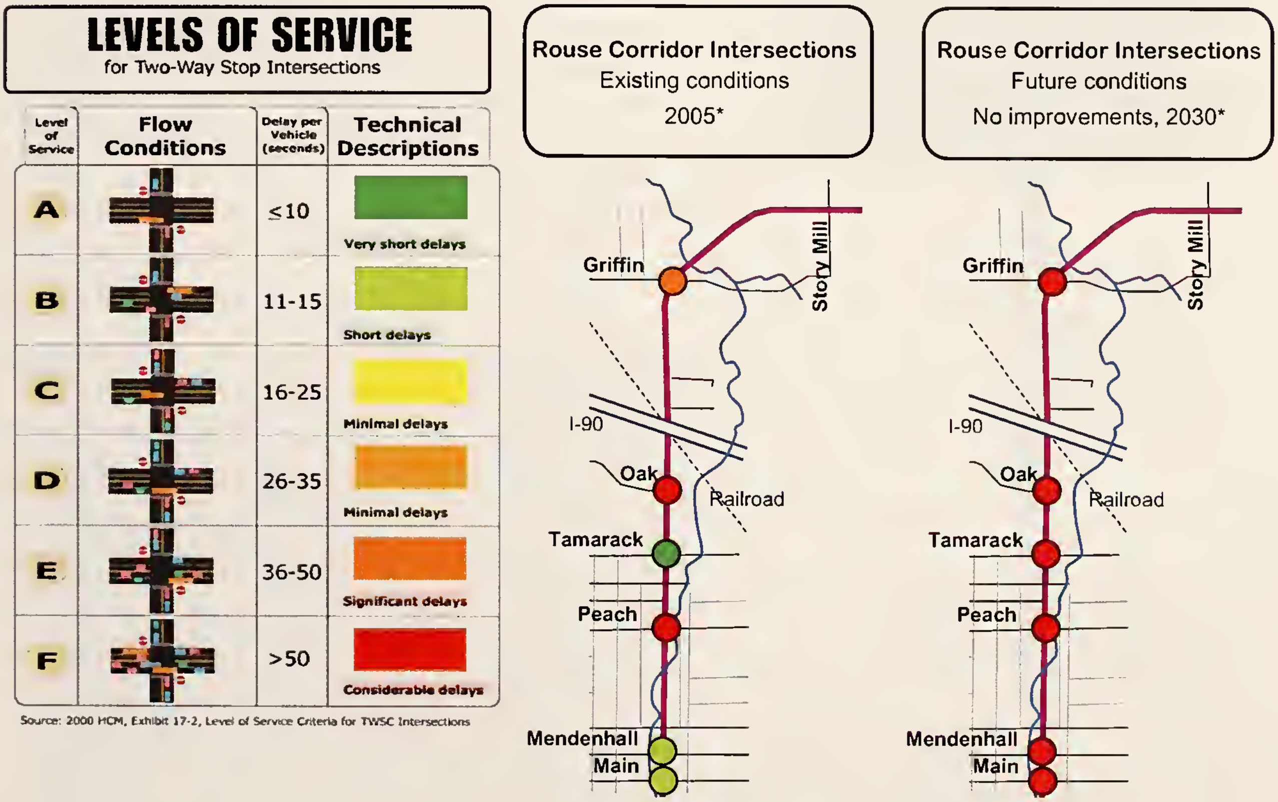
The need for a project is generally established through an examination of such characteristics as capacity and forecast travel demand, accident history, lack of roadway network linkages, or outdated design features. The following categories, outlined in FHWA guidance, apply to issues or characteristics present in the Rouse Avenue corridor which point to a need for improvements. As described below, roadway capacity and pedestrian/bicycle routes can be accommodated in a variety of ways, but Rouse Avenue is particularly important in fulfilling these needs in Bozeman due to its continuous north-south link through this portion of the community.

Current and Projected Level of Service

Traffic conditions on transportation facilities are commonly defined using the LOS concept. The *Highway Capacity Manual* (HCM) defines LOS based on average travel speed, percent time delay, intersection delay, and capacity utilization to provide a qualitative assessment of the driver's experience. As shown in Figure 1-3, six LOS categories ranging from A to F are used to describe traffic operations. LOS A represents the best conditions and LOS F represents the worst. The existing facility does not provide adequate capacity to accommodate current traffic volumes during peak periods. If no improvements are made, traffic congestion in the corridor will worsen and the peak periods (or morning and evening rush hours) will extend in duration by the year 2030. In particular, intersection operations on Rouse Avenue are anticipated to degrade to LOS F, meaning drivers will experience substantial delays at these locations. Rouse Avenue will not be capable of accommodating increased traffic volumes in the future without intersection improvements which may include signals, roundabouts, and/or turn lanes at many locations.

As illustrated in Figure 1-3, the Rouse Avenue facility currently fails to meet desirable (C or better) LOS at three of six major study intersections. Without improvements, the LOS will be at F at these six intersections in the corridor within the design year of 2030.

Figure 1-3
LOS Definitions and Characteristics in the Rouse Avenue Corridor



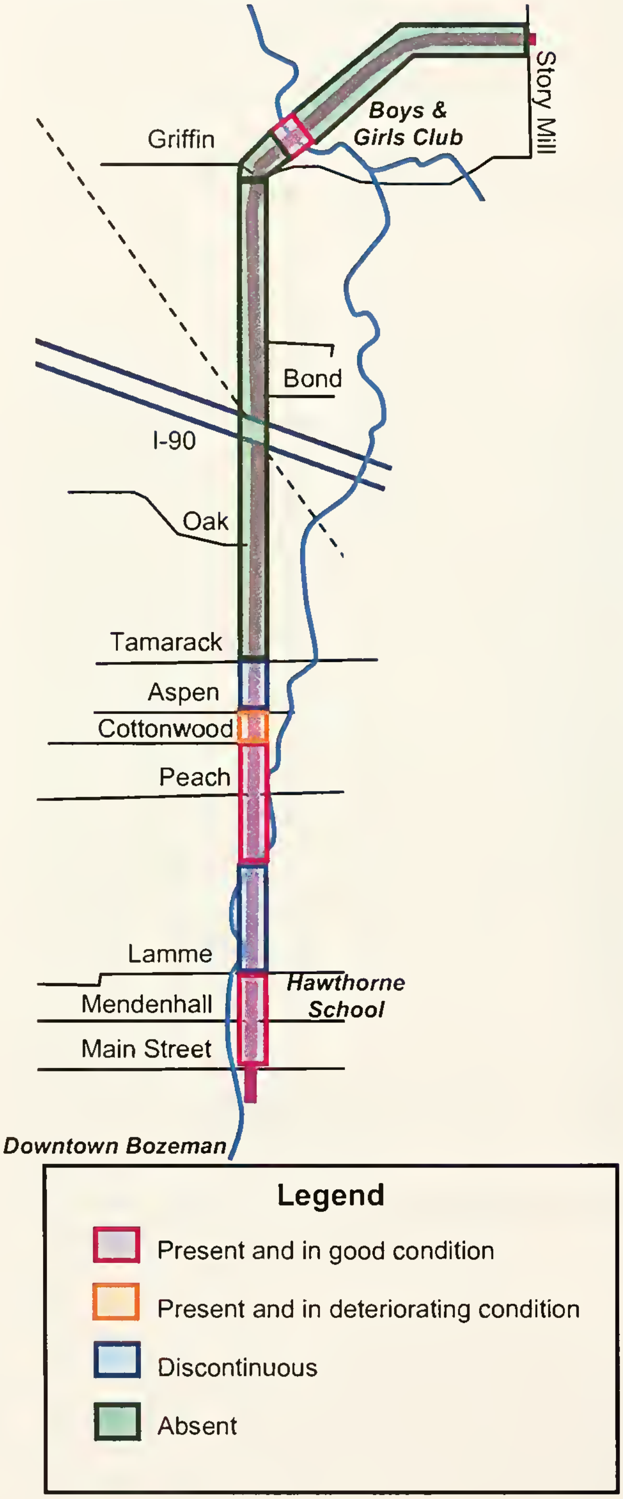
LEVELS OF SERVICE
for Two-Way Stop Intersections

Level of Service	Flow Conditions	Delay per Vehicle (seconds)	Technical Descriptions
A		≤10	🟩 Very short delays
B		11-15	🟩 Short delays
C		16-25	🟨 Minimal delays
D		26-35	🟧 Minimal delays
E		36-50	🟧 Significant delays
F		>50	🟥 Considerable delays

Source: 2000 HCM, Exhibit 17-2, Level of Service Criteria for TWSC Intersections

*Based on PM Peak Hour Conditions

Figure 1-4
Overview of Sidewalk Conditions in the Rouse Avenue Corridor



Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Rouse Avenue is currently used by pedestrians, including school-aged children walking to/from Hawthorne School; visitors to the Boys and Girls Club in the north end of the corridor; and residents traveling between the downtown business area and their homes. Current pedestrian facilities are, however, inconsistent throughout the corridor. Sidewalks are present and in good condition in some locations, the sidewalks have deteriorating concrete (i.e., cracking, crumbling, or uneven) in others, and pedestrian routes are discontinuous or nonexistent in other locations. These facilities do not meet the current requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This poor condition, inaccessibility, and inconsistency in the route discourages pedestrian travel or requires that they travel on the roadway in several portions of the corridor. Sidewalk conditions are illustrated in Figure 1-4, and pictured in Photo 1-1.

Photo 1-1
Discontinuous sidewalk along Rouse

Rouse Avenue does not currently have bicycle lanes, and the paved width is inconsistent throughout the corridor. The paved roadway width ranges from approximately 36 to 61 feet, averaging about 40 feet throughout the corridor. Varying lane widths may cause bicyclists to ride in traffic. In addition, public comments expressed concern over the uneven pavement near the railroad tracks.

The *City of Bozeman Bicycle Map* notes that the section of Rouse Avenue between Tamarack and Griffin is classified as "Bicyclists Use Caution" and signage alerts motorists to bicycle travel. This signage is shown in Photo 1-2. The *Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan Year 2001 Update* notes that the portion of Rouse Avenue between Main and Oak is "proposed [for a] bike lane" and the portion of Rouse Avenue north of Oak is "proposed [for a] bike path," as noted in Figure 1-5. A bike lane is a portion of the roadway that is designated for bicycle use. A bike path is a separated path designated for use by bicycles.

Photo 1-2
Signage on Rouse Alerting Motorists of Bicycle Use

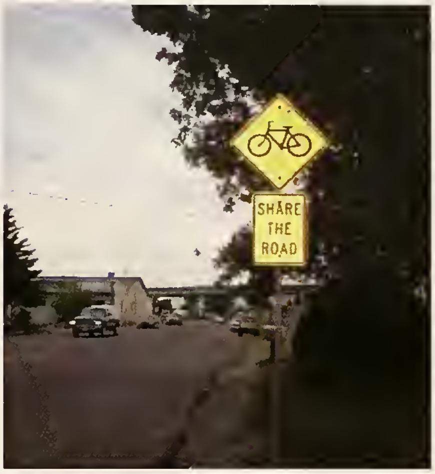
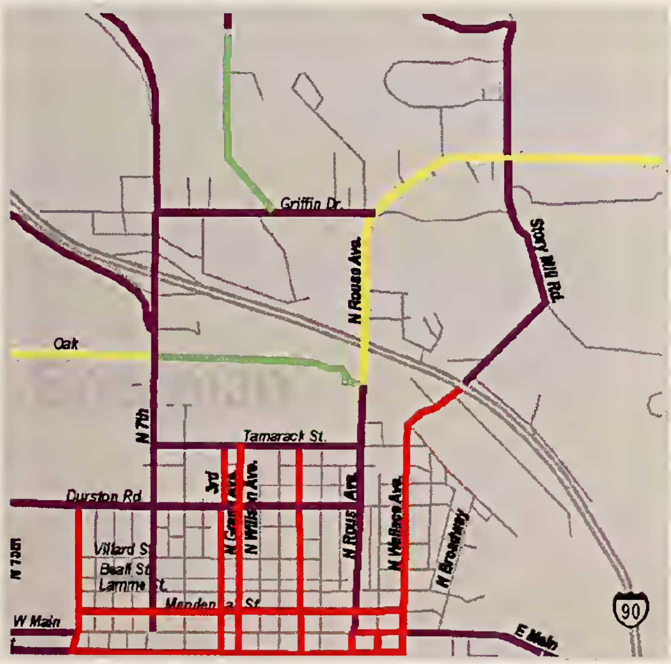


Figure 1-5
Bozeman Bicycle Route Map



Source: Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan, 2001

LEGEND

- 🟩 Existing Bike Lane
- 🟦 Existing Bike Path
- 🟨 Proposed Bike Path
- 🟪 Proposed Bike Lane
- 🟥 Proposed Bike Route

1.5 Project Opportunities and Goals

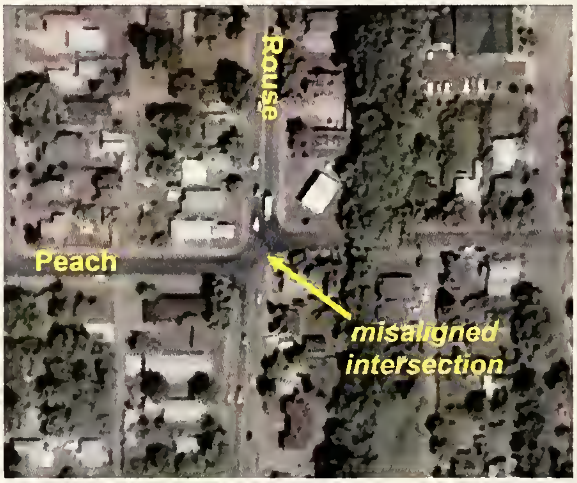
Through the scoping process, MDT gathered input from regulatory agencies and public participants to establish the criteria to be used to develop and evaluate alternatives that meet the stated purpose and need for the proposed project. During public meetings held in January and May of 2006, public participants expressed concern about the potential width of the proposed roadway. They expressed a desire for better travel conditions for vehicles, a designated route for bicycle travelers, and better amenities for pedestrians but did not want to create a roadway that would encourage higher speeds or require substantial amounts of new right-of-way and relocation of homes and businesses. These values, or criteria, were then used to develop the following Project Goals.

- Maintain community character
- Minimize impacts to community facilities and resources
- Accommodate residential parking needs
- Integrate flexibility in project design criteria

These goals are discussed in more detail in the following sections, and are used in Chapter 2 to provide balance in the selection of transportation amenities included in the Preferred Alternative.

In addition to fulfilling the goals stated above, a build alternative on Rouse Avenue could provide additional opportunities to improve system linkage and correct geometric deficiencies in the corridor.

Figure 1-6
Misaligned Intersection at Rouse and Peach



System Linkage

As depicted in Figures 1-1 and 1-2, Rouse Avenue is the only continuous route in the northeastern portion of Bozeman, and serves as one of only three continuous north-south routes in the entire city.

Rouse Avenue serves both local traffic accessing neighboring residential and business areas, as well as regional traffic accessing downtown Bozeman, Bridger Canyon, and the Bridger Bowl Ski Area.

Geometric Deficiencies

The intersection of Rouse Avenue and Peach Street is misaligned, as shown in Figure 1-6, and should be corrected if improvements are made in this corridor. Correction of this intersection is desirable due to the potential safety concerns associated with increased traffic volumes and turning movement conflicts at this intersection through the design year.

Maintain community character. As depicted in Figure 1-7, the Rouse Avenue corridor extends from the downtown commercial/municipal district, through an established residential area, then transitions into a light industrial and commercial zone near the Interstate. New residential developments are planned or underway in the northeastern portion of the project area between Griffin and Story Mill as the corridor becomes otherwise more rural in nature. These various land use types and the trips those uses generate along the same corridor make defining a unifying character very difficult. Most public participants recognize the regional importance of the Rouse Avenue corridor and that it serves local residential needs, provides area-wide business access, and serves as the sole access for residents and recreational users of the Bridger Canyon area. A balanced goal to maintain the community character of the entire corridor would best be accomplished by limiting the vehicular footprint in the residential section while providing amenities for other modes of transportation such as sidewalks and bicycle lanes and buffering the residential areas with landscaped boulevards.

Minimize impacts to community facilities and resources. As depicted in Figure 1-8, there are a number of community amenities within the corridor, including Hawthorne Elementary School, the Boys and Girls Club, Bozeman Creek, Creekside Park, and the historic Bozeman Hotel. A great deal of concern was raised over the safety of children walking to/from Hawthorne Elementary School along or across Rouse Avenue. A specific project goal would be to ensure that measures are taken to provide safe sidewalks and crossings for school-age children in the proximity of Hawthorne Elementary School and the Boys and Girls Club. The community also expressed a desire to avoid impacts to Bozeman Creek, Creekside Park, and historic structures such as the Bozeman Hotel.

Figure 1-7
Existing Community Character

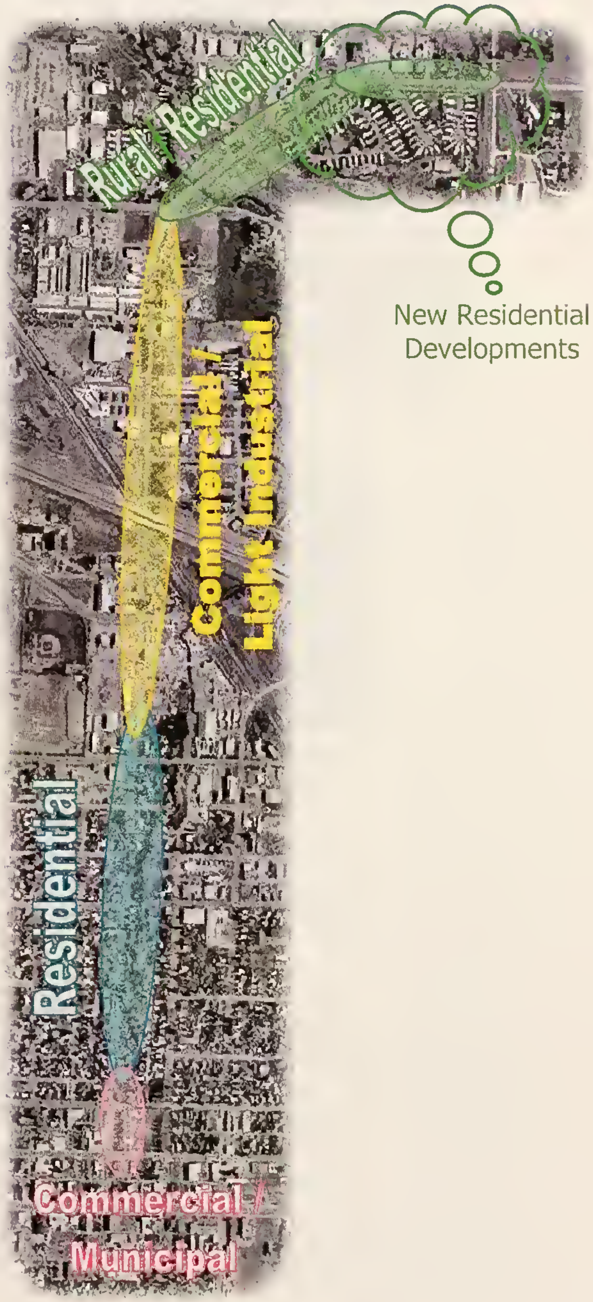
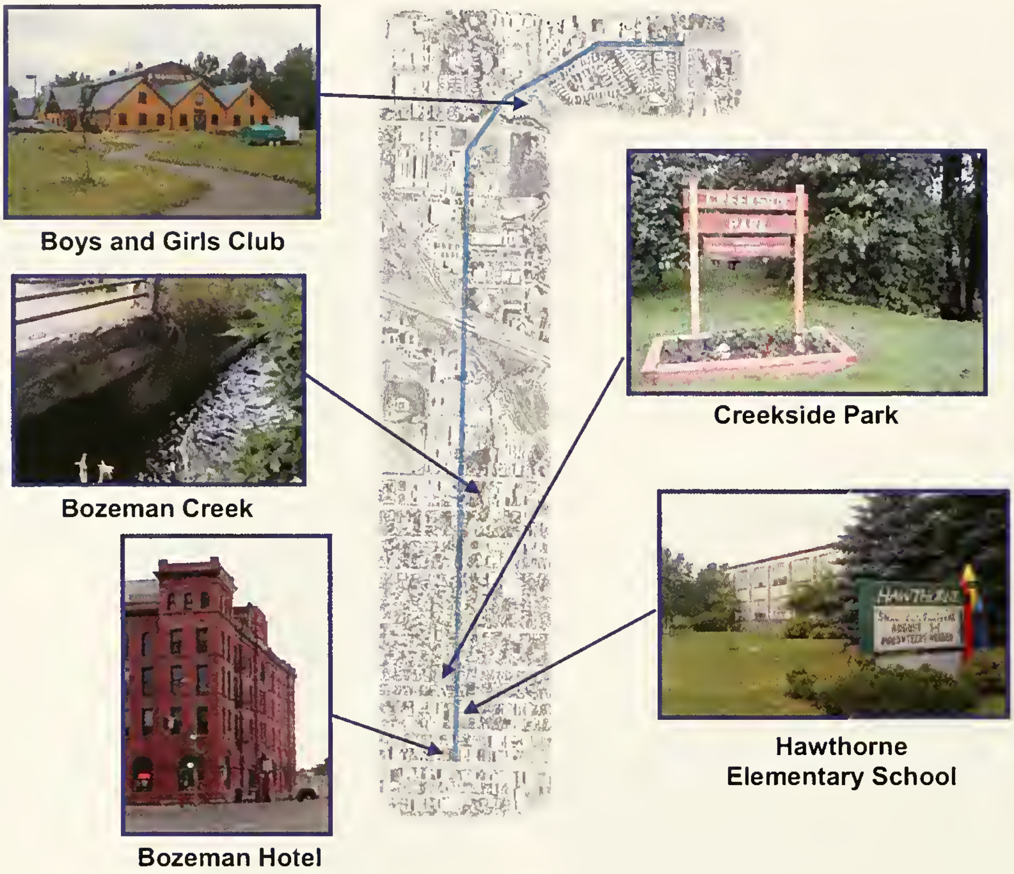


Figure 1-8
Community Resources in the Rouse Avenue Corridor



Accommodate residential parking needs. Widening the roadway for more vehicular capacity, bike lanes, or sidewalks while attempting to minimize impacts to adjacent land uses means some of these transportation amenities may have to be reduced or eliminated from further consideration. On-street parking is often eliminated in downtown areas to provide more through-street capacity. During project scoping, Rouse Avenue residents in the southern portion of the corridor expressed a preference for on-street parking, especially where residents do not have driveways, alley access, or other off-street parking options. At the May 2006 public meeting, attendees were asked to rank the importance of parking, bike lanes, protection of Bozeman Creek, and any other concerns they may hold in higher priority. Parking was not listed as a top priority by any of the respondents to the informal survey, but often ranked second. Given the relative importance as expressed by the public, and the realistic need to provide parking for adjacent residences, creative solutions for these parking needs would need to be evaluated with any proposed improvements.

Integrate Flexibility in Project Design Criteria. As a State Primary route, Rouse Avenue must meet certain design criteria if substantive improvements are to be made. MDT's design guidelines for this type of route include the following minimum widths:

- 11-foot travel-lane widths
- 11-foot turn-lane widths
- 10-foot parking-lane widths
- 5-foot bike lane widths

Flexibility in these guidelines is acceptable under certain circumstances. In this case, MDT has noted two specific deviations:

1- MDT's Urban Design Guidelines allow for an eight-foot (8') parking-lane width when this lane is not anticipated to be a travel lane and there is an adjacent bike lane. Having met these criteria with the proposed improvements, a design except would be required from MDT for the Rouse Avenue project.

2- The 11-foot center turn lane width is a minimum requirement, but not highly desirable by MDT. In the northern portion of the corridor, where more right-of-way is available, MDT would prefer to construct a 12-foot center turn lane. All build alternatives thus include 11 foot turn lanes in the southerly portion of the corridor, and 12 foot turn lanes in the northerly portion of the corridor.

The *Design Standards and Specifications Policy* adopted by the City of Bozeman does not specify any dimensions, and indicates that right-of-way and back-of-curb to back-of-curb street width will be determined on a case by case basis. The City does, however, require five foot (5') sidewalks on their principal arterials. While no standard width is identified, the City also requires boulevards on principal arterials to provide space for snow storage and separation of pedestrians and vehicles. The boulevards also provide space for trees and other forms of corridor landscaping, which the City considers as an essential ingredient to producing a livable community. The *Transportation Plan* also identifies the need for bike lanes on both sides of the road.

Due to public concern, MDT and the City of Bozeman have agreed to be flexible in these standards in an attempt to accommodate all of the desired amenities while minimizing impacts. Where safe and prudent, the minimum standards would be applied to the final design to minimize impacts to the surrounding area.

All of the above design considerations, opportunities, and goals for meeting and enhancing the general character of the corridor are carried forward in Chapter 2 as screening (or evaluation) criteria for all alternatives that fully satisfy the basic need of improved Level of Service and enhanced bicycle and pedestrian mobility in the corridor.

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2.0 ALTERNATIVES

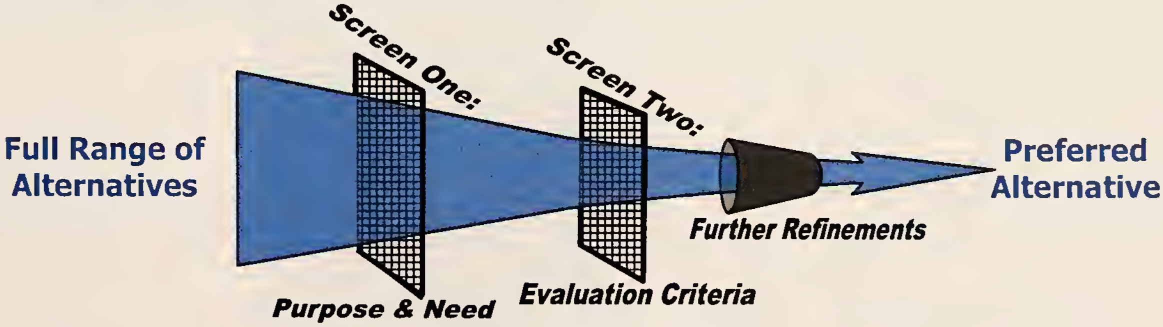
This chapter describes the alternatives that were developed for the proposed Rouse Avenue project, explains which ones were retained based on their ability to meet the stated Purpose and Need, and describes alternatives that were determined to be "reasonable" due to their sensitivity to the surrounding built and natural environments.

2.1 Development of Alternatives

Through public involvement activities and interdisciplinary coordination with federal, state, and local transportation officials and resource agencies, a number of alternatives were developed and analyzed for their operational benefits and general impacts to the surrounding built and natural environment. According to the stated Purpose and Need for the proposed project, alternatives were developed to provide increased capacity for vehicle travel, and an enhanced corridor for bicycle and pedestrian travel. Once an alternative appeared to satisfy the basic Purpose and Need, it was further reviewed in the context of the design guidelines and the opportunities and goals established from public input. For an alternative to be considered reasonable, it needed to meet Purpose and Need, then show sensitivity to the surrounding community character and minimize impacts to those elements identified as important to the community.

In addition to the No-Build Alternative, four Build Alternatives were initially developed (Alternatives A, B, C, and D). Figure 2-1 below depicts how the broad range of initial alternatives was screened, or evaluated, through two levels. Remaining alternatives were then further refined to identify the Preferred Alternative. As described in the following sections, some of the alternatives failed to meet Purpose and Need, and did not progress past Screen One; and none of the remaining alternatives fully satisfied the evaluation criteria in Screen Two. Those that best satisfied the evaluation criteria were further refined into a single alternative which is presented at the end of this chapter as the Preferred Alternative.

Figure 2-1
Alternatives Development and Screening Process



The following sections provide a detailed description of each alternative initially considered for this proposed project, then discuss the screening process outlined above.

The **No-Build Alternative** would essentially maintain the existing conditions along the entire length of the project corridor by providing routine maintenance. There would be no improvement in vehicular capacity, no improvements to the existing sidewalks, no provision of bicycle facilities, and no opportunity for other geometric improvements in the corridor. This alternative does not meet the stated Purpose and Need, but it is carried forward as a baseline for comparative analysis and as a viable option if the impacts appear to outweigh the benefits of the proposed project.

Alternative A is a three-lane urban section from Main Street to Bond Street, and a three-lane rural section from Bond north to Story Mill Road, widened symmetrically from the centerline of the existing alignment.

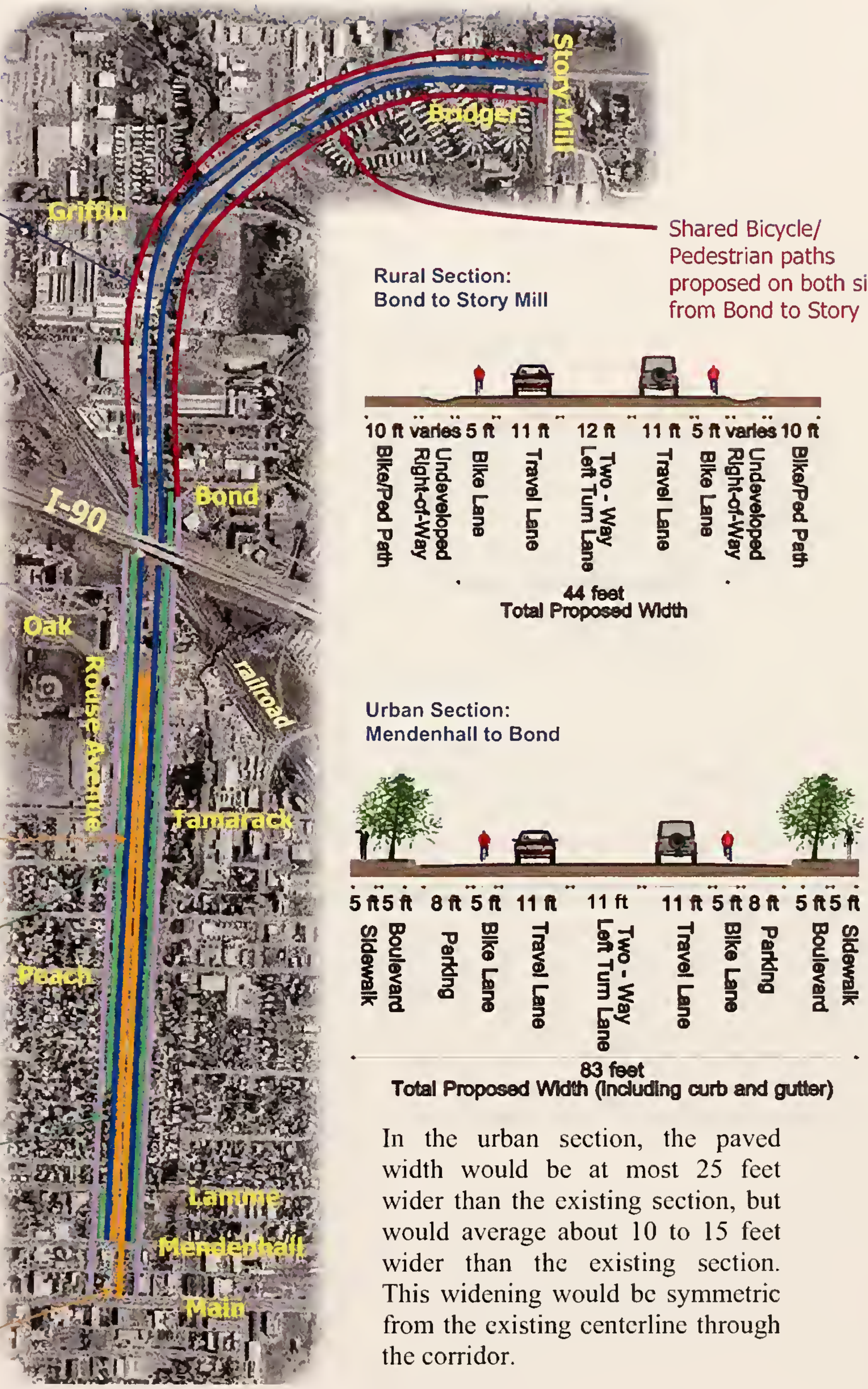
The primary elements of Alternative A include:

- Reconstruction of Rouse Avenue between Main Street and Mendenhall Street within existing right-of-way limits.
- Three-lane urban section from Main Street to Bond Street, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- Three-lane rural section from Bond Street to Story Mill Road, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- Parking lanes on the east side of the roadway from Main Street to Mendenhall Street and on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall Street to Oak Street
- Sidewalks on both sides of the roadway from Main to Bond Street, and a shared pedestrian/bicycle path on both sides of the road from Bond Street to Story Mill Road.
- Bike lanes on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall to Story Mill Road
- Boulevard on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall Street to Bond Street, except between Lamme Street and the location where Bozeman Creek crosses Rouse Avenue, where boulevards are only included on the east side of the street
- Side-street improvements at intersections to accommodate turning movements

Figure 2-2 illustrates the primary elements of Alternative A, and the differences between the urban and rural sections.

Figure 2-2
Primary Elements for Alternative A

(3-lane,
widened symmetrically)



Bike Lanes proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Story Mill.

Sidewalks proposed on both sides from Main to Bond.

Parking proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Oak.

Boulevards proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Bond, except as noted below.

Boulevards eliminated on west side due to narrow corridor between Lamme and Bozeman Creek crossing.

Parking proposed on east side only from Main to Mendenhall.

Shared Bicycle/ Pedestrian paths proposed on both sides from Bond to Story Mill.

Rural Section:
Bond to Story Mill

Urban Section:
Mendenhall to Bond

In the urban section, the paved width would be at most 25 feet wider than the existing section, but would average about 10 to 15 feet wider than the existing section. This widening would be symmetric from the existing centerline through the corridor.

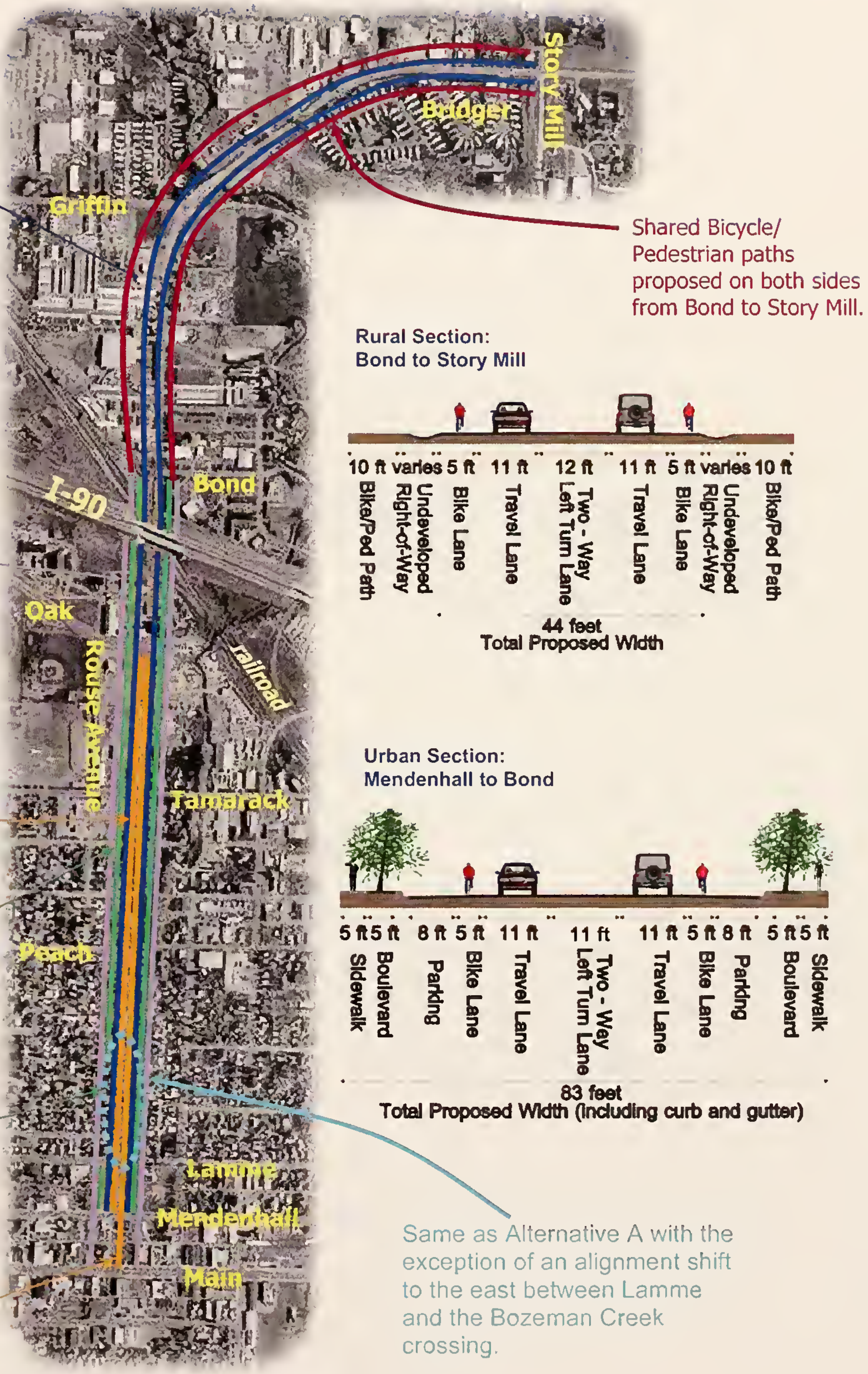
Alternative B is a three-lane section widened symmetrically from the centerline of the existing alignment except between Lamme Street and the Bozeman Creek crossing, where the alternative would be widened to the east to avoid impacts to Bozeman Creek. Alternative B is a three-lane urban section from Main Street to Bond Street and three-lane rural section north of Bond to Story Mill Road. Alternative B incorporates the same design elements and lane widths as Alternative A. They are:

- Reconstruction of Rouse between Main Street and Mendenhall Street within existing right-of-way limits.
- Three-lane urban section from Main Street to Bond Street, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- Three-lane rural section from Bond Street to Story Mill Road, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- Parking lanes on the east side of the roadway from Main Street to Mendenhall Street and on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall Street to Oak Street
- Sidewalks on both sides of the roadway from Main Street to Bond Street, and a shared pedestrian and bicycle path on both sides of the road from Bond Street to Story Mill Road.
- Bike lanes on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall Street to Story Mill Road
- Boulevard from Mendenhall Street to Bond Street, except between Lamme Street and the location where Bozeman Creek crosses Rouse Avenue, where boulevards are only included on east side of the street
- Side-street improvements at intersections to accommodate turning movements

As illustrated in Figure 2-3, the urban and rural sections shown for Alternative A also apply to Alternative B. The only difference between these two alternatives is that the proposed alignment of Alternative B is shifted so that the widening would occur entirely to the east between Lamme Street and the Bozeman Creek crossing in an effort to avoid the creek.

Figure 2-3
Primary Elements for Alternative B

(3-lane, widened symmetrically – modified)



Bike Lanes proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Story Mill.

Sidewalks proposed on both sides from Main to Bond.

Parking proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Oak.

Boulevards proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Bond, except as noted below.

Boulevards eliminated on west side due to narrow corridor between Lamme and Bozeman Creek crossing.

Parking proposed on east side only from Main to Mendenhall.

Shared Bicycle/ Pedestrian paths proposed on both sides from Bond to Story Mill.

Same as Alternative A with the exception of an alignment shift to the east between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek crossing.

Alternative C is a five-lane urban section from Main Street to Bond Street and a five-lane rural section between Bond Street and Story Mill Road, widened symmetrically from the existing alignment. The primary elements of Alternative C include:

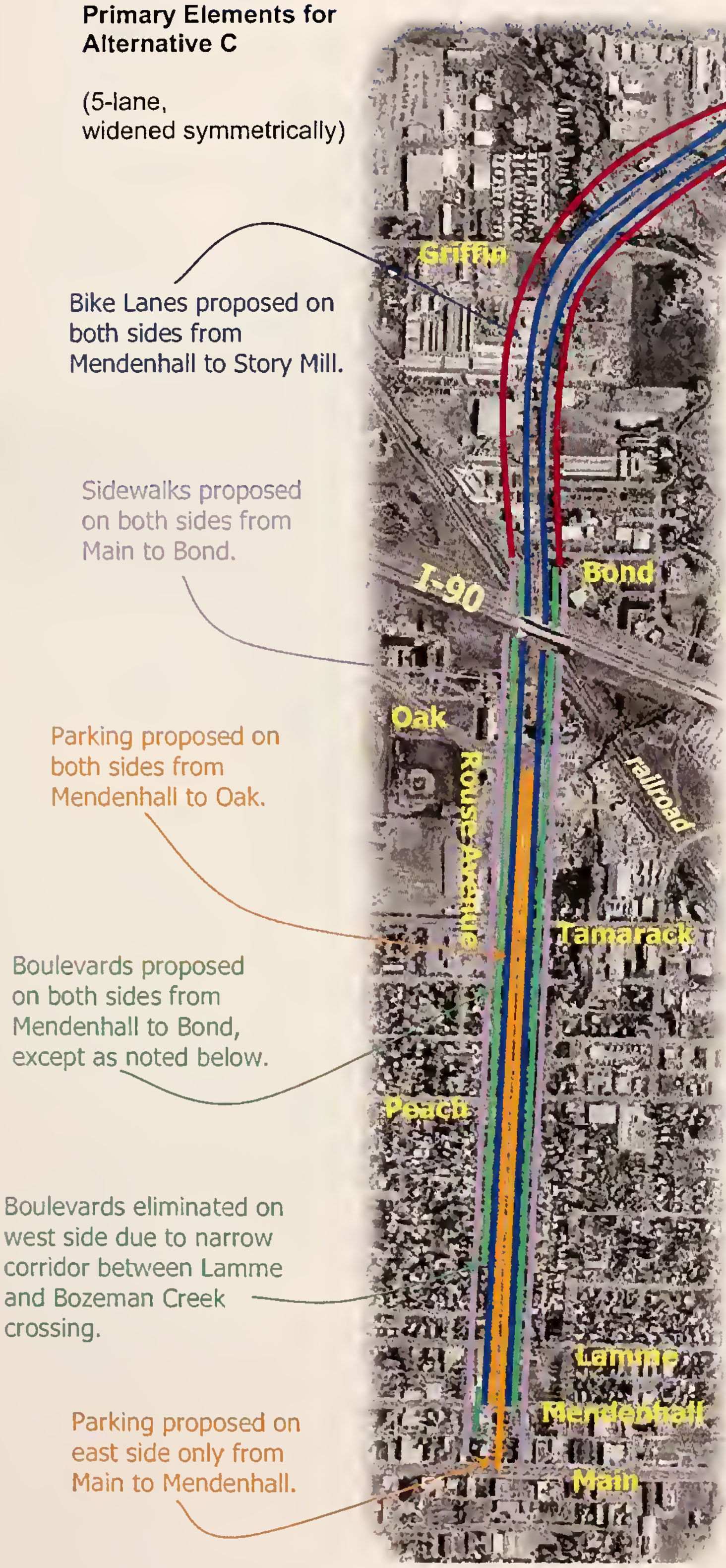
- Five-lane urban section from Main Street to Bond Street, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- Five-lane rural section from Bond Street to Story Mill Road, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- Parking lanes on the east side of the roadway from Main Street to Mendenhall Street and on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall Street to Oak Street
- Sidewalks on both sides of the roadway from Main Street to Bond Street, and a shared pedestrian and bicycle path on both sides of the road from Bond Street to Story Mill Road.
- Bike lanes on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall Street to Story Mill Road
- Boulevard from Mendenhall Street to Bond Street, except between Lamme Street and the location where Bozeman Creek crosses Rouse, where boulevards are only included on east side of the street

This five-lane alternative achieves LOS C at all intersections except Main Street and Rouse Avenue without any side-street improvements at the intersections.

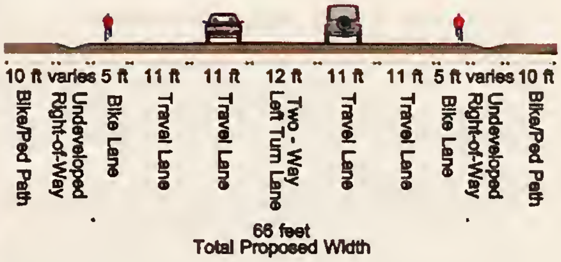
Figure 2-4 illustrates the primary elements and differences between the urban and rural sections for Alternative C.

Figure 2-4
Primary Elements for Alternative C

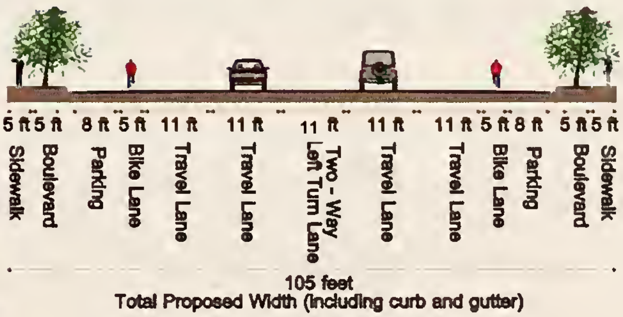
(5-lane,
widened symmetrically)


Story Mill
Bridger
Griffin
Bond
I-90
Oak
railroad
Rouse Avenue
Tamarack
Peach
Lamme
Mendenhall
Main
Bike Lanes proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Story Mill.
Sidewalks proposed on both sides from Main to Bond.
Parking proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Oak.
Boulevards proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Bond, except as noted below.
Boulevards eliminated on west side due to narrow corridor between Lamme and Bozeman Creek crossing.
Parking proposed on east side only from Main to Mendenhall.
Shared/ Bicycle Pedestrian paths proposed on both sides from Bond to Story Mill.

Rural Section:
Bond to Story Mill

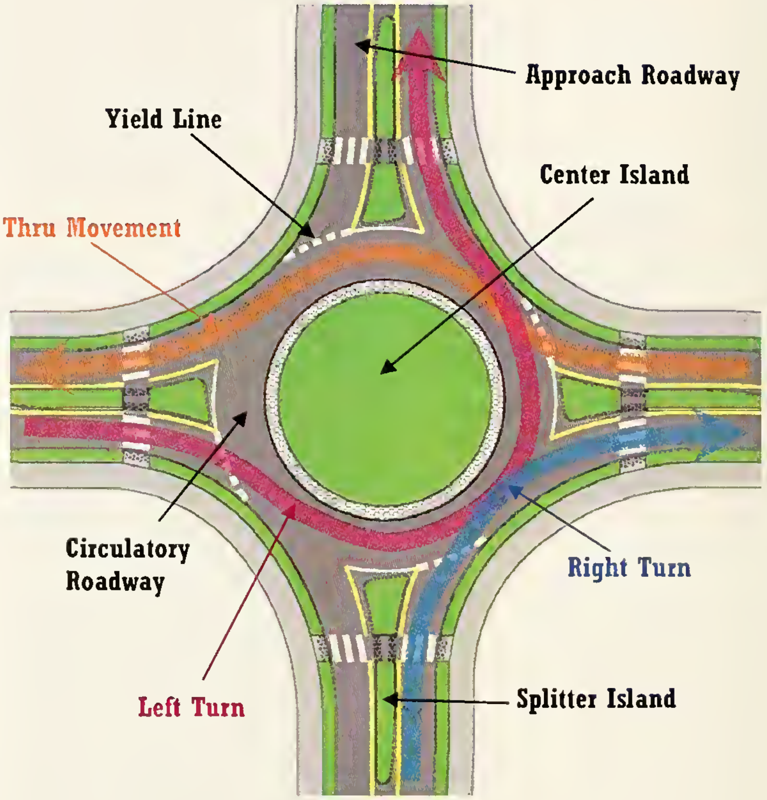


Urban Section:
Mendenhall to Bond



In the urban section, the paved width would be at most 50 feet wider than the existing section, but would average about 35 to 40 feet wider than the existing section. This widening is symmetric from the existing centerline throughout the corridor.

Figure 2-5
Typical Roundabout Features



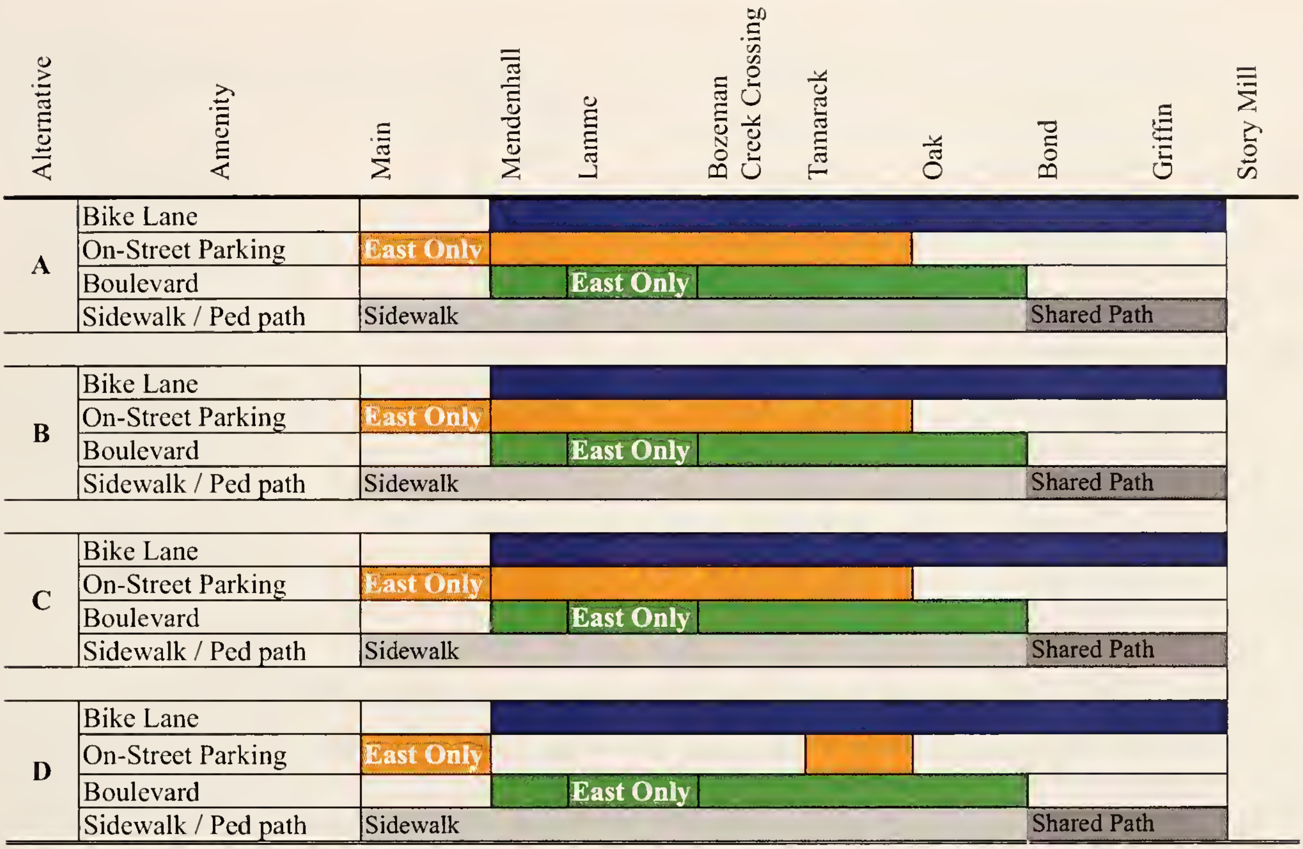
Alternative D is a three-lane urban section from Main to Bond and a three-lane rural section north of Bond. Roundabouts would be used instead of signals at intersections where signals are warranted (see discussion of intersection control in Section 2.4, following). The center turn-lanes are interrupted by medians as they approach the roundabout intersections. Figure 2-5 shows this type of intersection. The primary elements of Alternative D are:

- Reconstruction of Rouse between Main and Mendenhall within existing right-of-way limits.
- Three-lane urban section from Main Street to Bond Street, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- Three-lane rural section from Bond Street to Story Mill Road, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- Parking lanes on the east side of the roadway from Main to Mendenhall, no parking from Mendenhall to Tamarack, and parking on both sides of the roadway from Tamarack to Oak
- Sidewalks on both sides of the roadway from Main to Bond Street, a shared pedestrian and bicycle path on the east / south sides of the road from Bond to Story Mill, and a pedestrian path on the west / north sides of the road from Bond to Story Mill
- Bike lanes on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall to Story Mill Road
- Boulevard from Mendenhall to Bond Street, except between Lamme and the location where Bozeman Creek crosses Rouse, where boulevards are only included on east side of the street.

Side street improvements at intersections are not included with Alternative D because of roundabout configurations. No typical sections are shown for Alternative D because lane widths vary throughout the corridor due to intersection configurations. The alignment of Alternative D is the same as Alternative B.

Table 2.1 compares all amenities provided for each of the four Build Alternatives.

Table 2.1
Comparison of Amenities for Build Alternatives



Alternative	Amenity	Main	Mendenhall	Lamme	Bozeman Creek Crossing	Tamarack	Oak	Bond	Griffin	Story Mill
A	Bike Lane		🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	
	On-Street Parking	🟧 East Only	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧				
	Boulevard		🟩	🟩 East Only	🟩	🟩	🟩			
	Sidewalk / Ped path	Sidewalk	▒	▒	▒	▒	▒	Shared Path	▒	
B	Bike Lane		🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	
	On-Street Parking	🟧 East Only	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧				
	Boulevard		🟩	🟩 East Only	🟩	🟩	🟩			
	Sidewalk / Ped path	Sidewalk	▒	▒	▒	▒	▒	Shared Path	▒	
C	Bike Lane		🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	
	On-Street Parking	🟧 East Only	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧				
	Boulevard		🟩	🟩 East Only	🟩	🟩	🟩			
	Sidewalk / Ped path	Sidewalk	▒	▒	▒	▒	▒	Shared Path	▒	
D	Bike Lane		🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	
	On-Street Parking	🟧 East Only				🟧				
	Boulevard		🟩	🟩 East Only	🟩	🟩	🟩			
	Sidewalk / Ped path	Sidewalk	▒	▒	▒	▒	▒	Shared Path	▒	

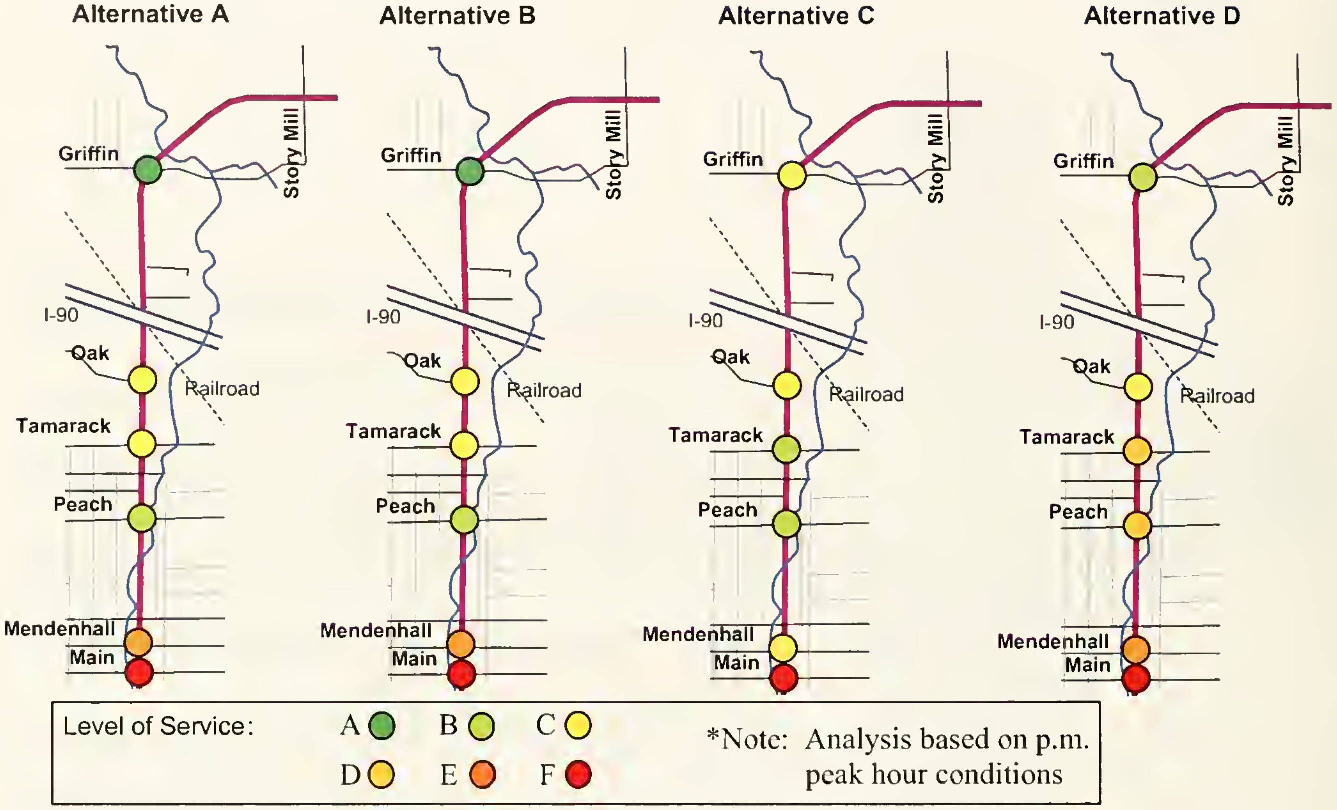
2.2 Alternatives Screening Process

All of the proposed alternatives, including the No-Build option, were evaluated using a two-phase screening process. In the first phase, they were evaluated to determine whether they met Purpose and Need. In the second, they were evaluated for their ability to meet project goals and design considerations.

Screen One:

The No-Build and four Build Alternatives were screened to determine how well they could meet Purpose and Need. The first step in Screen One was to see if they could improve LOS through the design year. As noted in Chapter 1, the No-Build alternative results in LOS F at all six major intersections in the corridor by the year 2030. The LOS forecasts for the four Build Alternatives are shown in Figure 2-6.

Figure 2-6
Year 2030 Level of Service Comparison



As illustrated in Figure 2-6 above, all four Build Alternatives fail to meet LOS C at the intersection of Rouse and Main, and all alternatives except Alternative C fail to meet LOS C at the intersection of Rouse and Mendenhall due to the constraints of these intersections. Additionally, Alternative D fails to meet LOS C at the Rouse intersections with Peach and Tamarack. This alternative provides the least improvement in LOS, and fails to achieve LOS C at most intersections.

Based on this screening analysis, Alternative D was eliminated from further consideration due to its inability to provide a comparable level-of-service to other alternatives with similar impacts and costs.

The three remaining Build Alternatives can equally accommodate the other aspects of the Purpose and Need regarding pedestrian and bicycle mobility, and were carried forward for the second level screening.

Screen Two:

Public participants in the scoping process stressed the importance of preserving the character of their community and of Rouse Avenue. They expressed this through a desire to minimize impacts to homes, businesses, community amenities, and historic properties throughout the corridor. Direct impacts resulting from Build Alternatives are discussed below.

A preliminary review of potential impacts was conducted for all project alternatives and is summarized in Table 2.2. Note that the No-Build Alternative would have no impacts throughout the corridor.

Table 2.2
Potential Impacts from Build Alternatives

Section	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Main to Mendenhall	• none	• none	• Bozeman Hotel • City Hall • Fire Station • 1 building
Mendenhall to Lamme	• 2 buildings	• 2 buildings	• 2 buildings
Lamme to Creek Crossing	• Bozeman Creek • Creekside Park • 3 buildings	• 10 buildings	• Bozeman Creek • Creekside Park • 12 buildings
Creek Crossing to Tamarack	• 4 buildings	• 5 buildings	• 27 buildings
Tamarack to Oak	• 1 building	• 1 building	• 1 building
Oak to Bond	• 1 building	• 1 building	• 1 building
Bond to Story Mill Road	• none	• none	• none
TOTALS	• Bozeman Creek • Creekside Park • 11 buildings	• 19 buildings	• 47 buildings, including Bozeman Hotel, City Hall, and the Fire Station • Bozeman Creek • Creekside Park

As demonstrated in the above table, widening to the east between Lamme Street and Bozeman Creek crossing (Alternative B) avoids impacts to Bozeman Creek and Creekside Park, but results in more impacts to buildings than Alternative A. A five-lane section (Alternative C) has more than double the number of impacts of either three-lane section (Alternatives A and B). Alternative A encroaches on Creekside Park by approximately 25 feet, compared to approximately 36 feet under Alternative C.

While not a specific screening criteria for this proposed project, it should be noted that the five-lane alternative is projected to cost over $10 million more than the three-lane alternatives. If the project were to be constructed in 2012 as currently programmed, the three-lane alternatives would cost approximately $18 million while the five-lane alternative would cost closer to $28.4 million. The vast majority of the difference lies in the cost for additional right-of-way and acquisitions required under the five-lane alternative.

All of the proposed alternatives include on-street parking, except between Main and Mendenhall, where parking is only included on the east side of the street. All of the alternatives were determined to adequately accommodate parking.

All of the alternatives include flexibility in the conceptual design to minimize impacts where possible and to accommodate the greatest number of corridor amenities.

Table 2.3 provides an overall summary of how well each alternative satisfied each of the screening criteria through the alternative screening process.

Table 2.3
Screening Summary

Screening Criteria	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
1: Meets Purpose and Need	Good	Good	Good	Poor
Recommendation	*Forward*	*Forward*	*Forward*	***Eliminate***
2: Maintains Community Character	Good	Good	Poor	--
Minimizes Impacts	Fair	Fair	Poor	--
Accommodates Residential Parking	Good	Good	Good	--
Integrates Flexible Design Criteria	Good	Good	Good	--
Recommendation	*Forward*	*Forward*	***Eliminate***	--

Due to the fact that the five-lane alternative (Alternative C) has a substantially larger footprint and greater level of impact but no appreciable difference in Level of Service, Alternative C was eliminated based on its inability to maintain community character as well as its substantial impacts compared to other alternatives.

Further Refinements:

As indicated in Table 2.3 above, Alternatives A and B meet Purpose and Need and generally fulfill the Project Goals. In an effort to further minimize the anticipated impacts, the Project Team explored refinements of the conceptual design. The area with the greatest extent of impact is in the narrowly constrained area between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek crossing. The corridor is confined by the creek on the west and dense residential development to the east. One possible refinement in this area would be to eliminate on-street parking and create off-street parking for affected residents. Boulevards could also be eliminated in short segments of the Rouse Avenue corridor, particularly where it is constrained by Bozeman Creek, in order to further reduce impacts to adjacent homes and businesses.

The Project Team also discussed a number of design options for bike/pedestrian paths along this corridor. These discussions occurred amongst City, MDT, and FHWA staff, as well as with members of the public who expressed particular concern for bike and pedestrian travel in the area. Provision of bike lanes along the roadway and sidewalks adjacent to the roadway appeared to meet the expressed needs of the bicycle interests in the constrained portion of the corridor (from Main to Bond); while bike lanes and separated bike/ped paths were more desirable in the northernmost portion of the corridor. While refining the remaining alternatives, it became apparent that it would be more cost effective and impose fewer impacts to extend the urban section from Bond up to the East Gallatin River crossing north of Griffin to include bike lanes and sidewalk for this entire extent of the corridor. For the remainder of the corridor, there is room within the right-of-way to accommodate a separated shared-use path on the north, but a shared use bike/ped path on the south would need to be constructed on the adjacent private property as those parcels develop in the future. Neither MDT, nor any other governmental agency can construct this portion of the path without additional right-of-way purchase or compensation to adjacent landowners; thus, the City is encouraged to require construction of this path by private interests as a condition of future subdivision approvals.

Table 2.4 provides a summary comparison of impacts of the refined alternative compared to Alternatives A and B. As demonstrated in the table, this refined alternative avoids impacts to Bozeman Creek and Creekside Park, reduces total right-of-way needs, and avoids direct impacts to at least five residences and two businesses when compared to Alternatives A or B.

Table 2.4
Impact Comparison

Corridor Portion	Alternative A	Alternative B	Refined Alternative
Main to Mendenhall	• none	• none	• none
Mendenhall to Lamme	• 2 businesses	• 2 businesses	• none
Lamme to Creek Crossing	• Bozeman Creek • Creekside Park • 3 residences	• 10 residences	• none
Creek Crossing to Tamarack	• 4 residences	• 5 residences	• 2 residences
Tamarack to Oak	• 1 public building	• 1 public building	• none
Oak to Bond	• 1 business	• 1 business	• 1 business
Bond to Story Mill Road	• none	• none	• none
Total Right-of-Way Required	• 1.9 acres	• 2.4 acres	• 1.4 acres
TOTALS	• Bozeman Creek • Creekside Park • 7 residences • 1 public building • 3 businesses	• 15 residences • 1 public building • 3 businesses	• 2 residences • 1 business

Based on the above comparison of impacts, and its ability to meet Purpose and Need and provide a balanced approach to the Project Goals, this refined alternative is forwarded as the Preferred Alternative for improvements in the Rouse Avenue corridor.

2.3 Identification of the Preferred Alternative

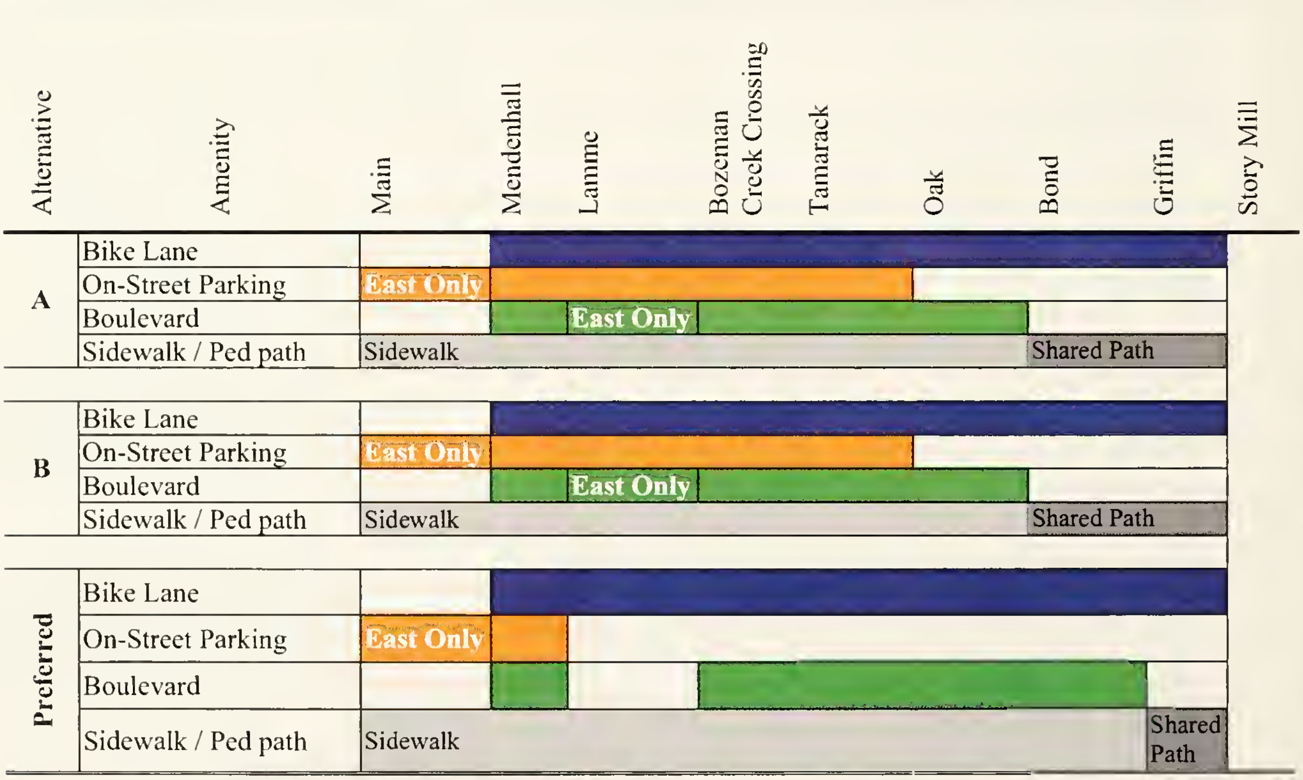
Under the Preferred Alternative, Rouse Avenue would follow the same alignment as Alternative B to avoid impacts to Bozeman Creek and Creekside Park, but would not include on-street parking or boulevards where impacts could be substantially reduced. The primary elements of this alternative include:

- Three-lane urban section from Main Street to the East Gallatin River crossing northeast of Griffin Drive, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane
- Three-lane rural section from the East Gallatin River crossing to Story Mill Road, including two through lanes and a two-way left turn lane except where the roadway is narrowed to fit under the Interstate 90 overpass.
- On-street parking on east side of the street between Main and Mendenhall, on both sides of the street between Mendenhall and Lamme, and off-street parking north of Lamme
- Sidewalks on both sides of the roadway from Main to the East Gallatin River crossing, (a shared pedestrian/bicycle path would be constructed on the north from the river crossing to Story Mill, but the path on the south would be provided by others concurrent with

development of those parcels – See Bicycle and Pedestrian Concerns in Chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion)
- Bike lanes on both sides of the roadway from Mendenhall to Story Mill Road
- Boulevard from Mendenhall to Griffin Street, except between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek crossing where boulevards are eliminated to avoid impacts to Bozeman Creek
- Side-street improvements at intersections to accommodate turning movements

The Preferred Alternative generally eliminates or modifies the design elements as indicated above, and in Table 2.5 below. For instance, on-street parking is eliminated from Lamme to Oak as compared to Alternatives A and B; boulevards are eliminated from Lamme to Bozeman Creek Crossing; sidewalks and boulevards are extended from Bond to Griffin; and the shared pedestrian path extends from that point to Story Mill.

Table 2.5
Comparison of Amenities for the Preferred Alternative

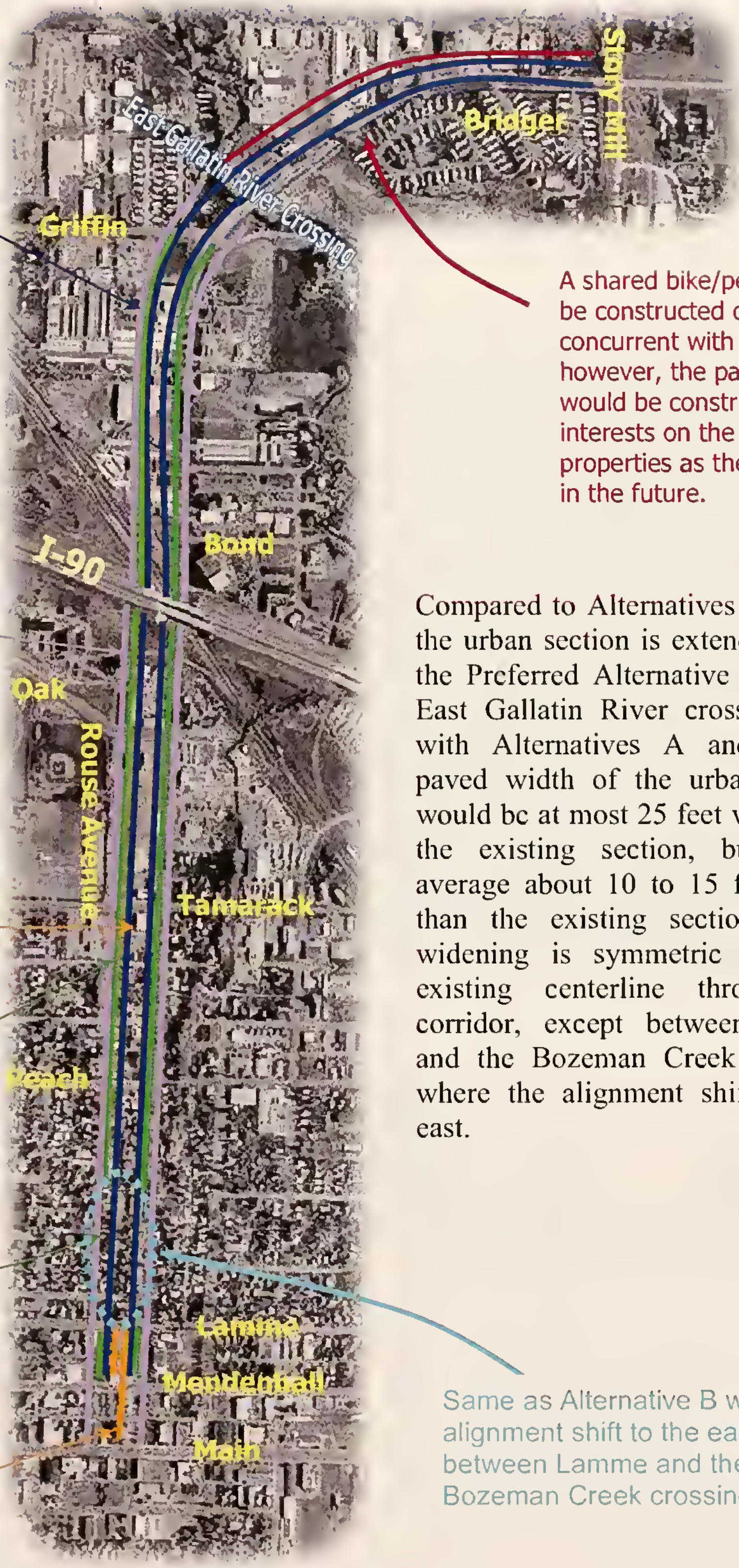


Alternative	Amenity	Main	Mendenhall	Lamme	Bozeman Creek Crossing	Tamarack	Oak	Bond	Griffin	Story Mill
A	Bike Lane		🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	
	On-Street Parking	East Only	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧				
	Boulevard		🟩	East Only	🟩	🟩	🟩			
	Sidewalk / Ped path	Sidewalk	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	Shared Path	▨	
B	Bike Lane		🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	
	On-Street Parking	East Only	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧				
	Boulevard		🟩	East Only	🟩	🟩	🟩			
	Sidewalk / Ped path	Sidewalk	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	Shared Path	▨	
Preferred	Bike Lane		🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	🟦	
	On-Street Parking	East Only	🟧							
	Boulevard		🟩		🟩	🟩	🟩	🟩		
	Sidewalk / Ped path	Sidewalk	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	Shared Path	

The Preferred Alternative is shown in Figures 2-7 and 2-8 on the following pages.

Figure 2-7
Primary Elements for Preferred Alternative

(3-lane, Refined)



Bike Lanes proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Story Mill.

Sidewalks proposed on both sides from Main to the East Gallatin River crossing.

On-Street parking eliminated north of Lamme. Off-street parking proposed at appropriate locations.

Boulevards proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Griffin, except as noted below.

Boulevards eliminated due to narrow corridor between Lamme and Bozeman Creek crossing.

Parking proposed on east side only from Main to Mendenhall. Parking proposed on both sides from Mendenhall to Lamme.

A shared bike/pedestrian path to be constructed on the north side concurrent with this project; however, the path to the south would be constructed by private interests on the adjacent properties as they are developed in the future.

Same as Alternative B with the alignment shift to the east between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek crossing.

Compared to Alternatives A and B, the urban section is extended under the Preferred Alternative up to the East Gallatin River crossing. As with Alternatives A and B, the paved width of the urban section would be at most 25 feet wider than the existing section, but would average about 10 to 15 feet wider than the existing section. This widening is symmetric from the existing centerline through the corridor, except between Lamme and the Bozeman Creek crossing, where the alignment shifts to the east.

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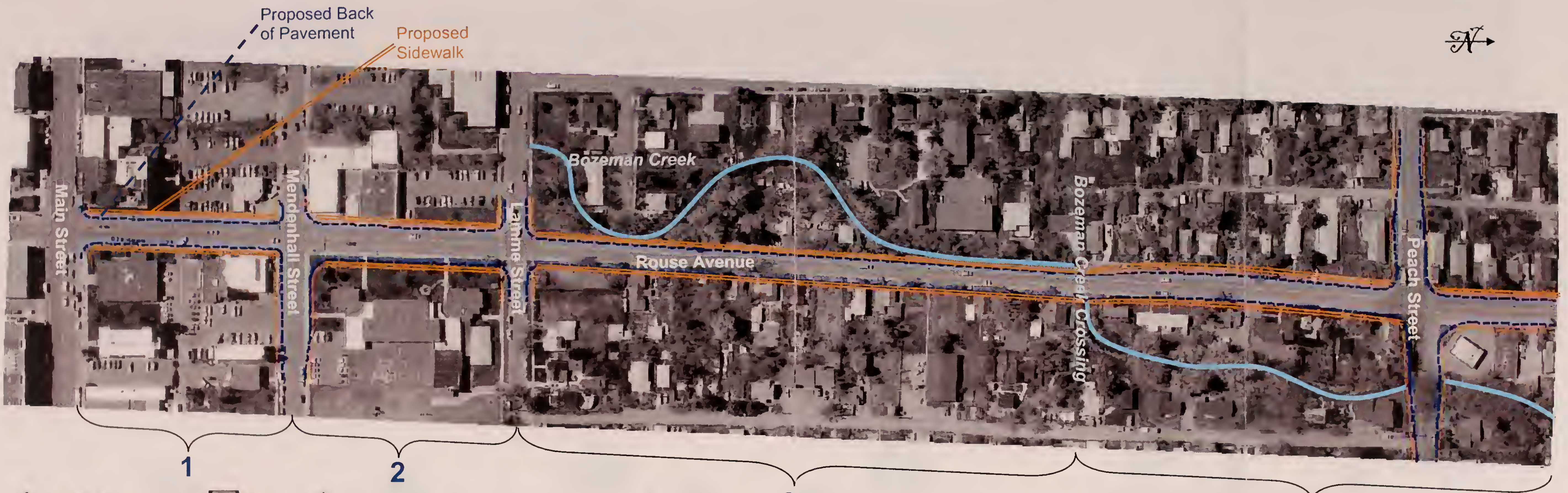
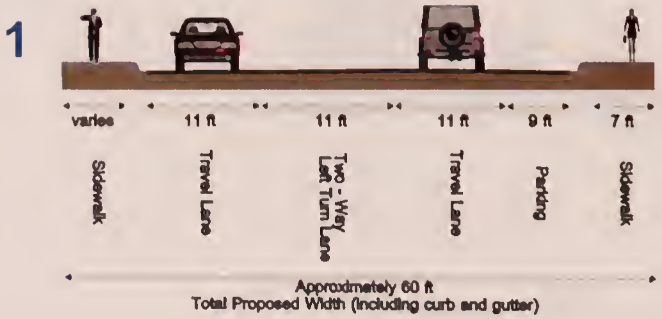
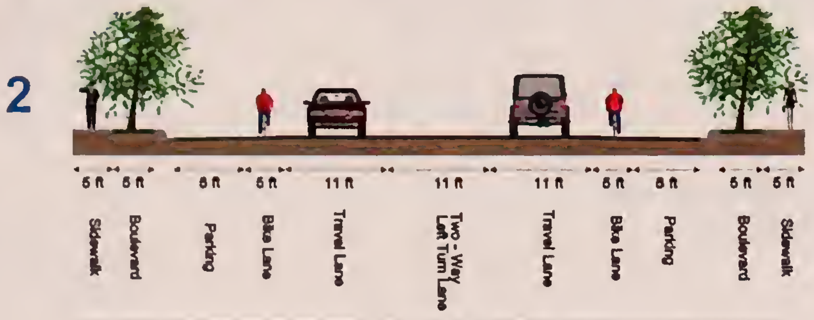
Figure 2-8
Footprint of the Preferred Alternative
Page 1 of 4

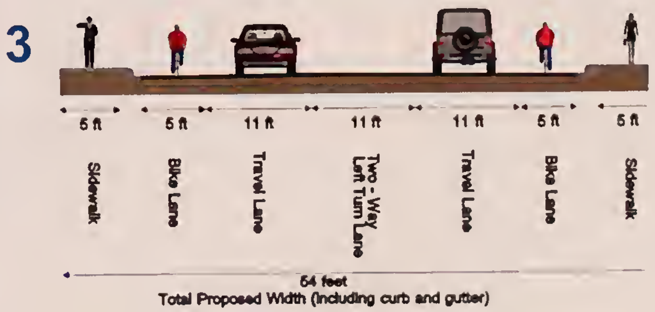




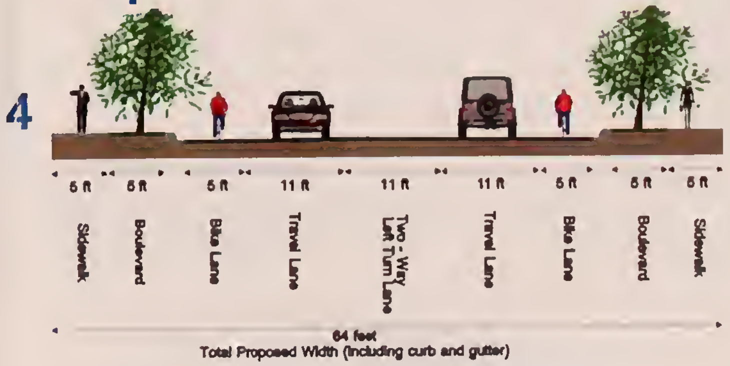
Match existing width to avoid impacts to the historic Bozeman Hotel.



A boulevard was added at the request of Hawthorne School



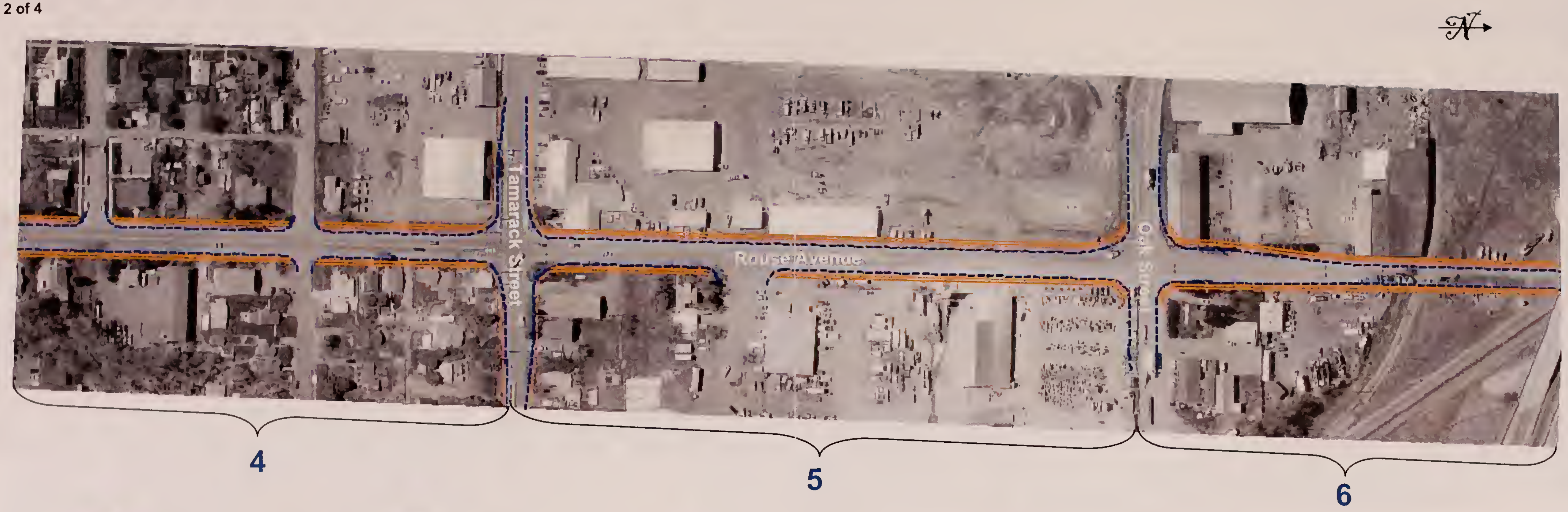
Eliminate boulevard and parking to avoid impacts to Bozeman Creek.



Parking was eliminated to minimize impacts in this residential portion of the corridor.

Notes:
Figure is not to scale.
Trees are not representative of final implementation.

Figure 2-8
Footprint of the Preferred Alternative
Page 2 of 4



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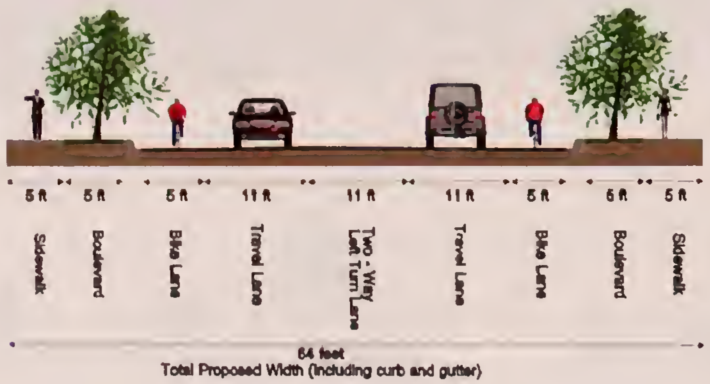
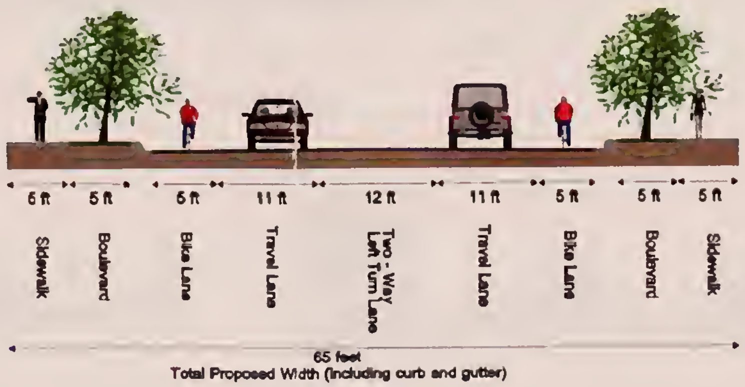


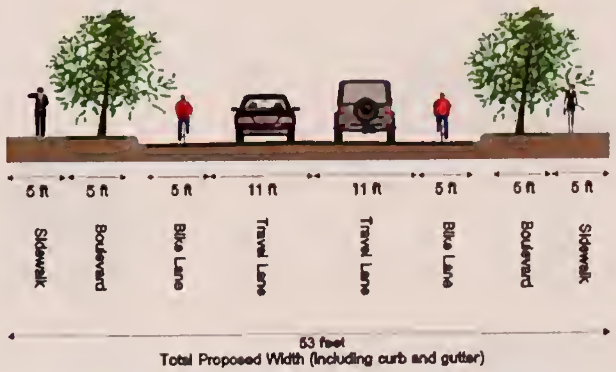
Parking was eliminated to minimize impacts in this residential portion of the corridor.

5



Full urban section

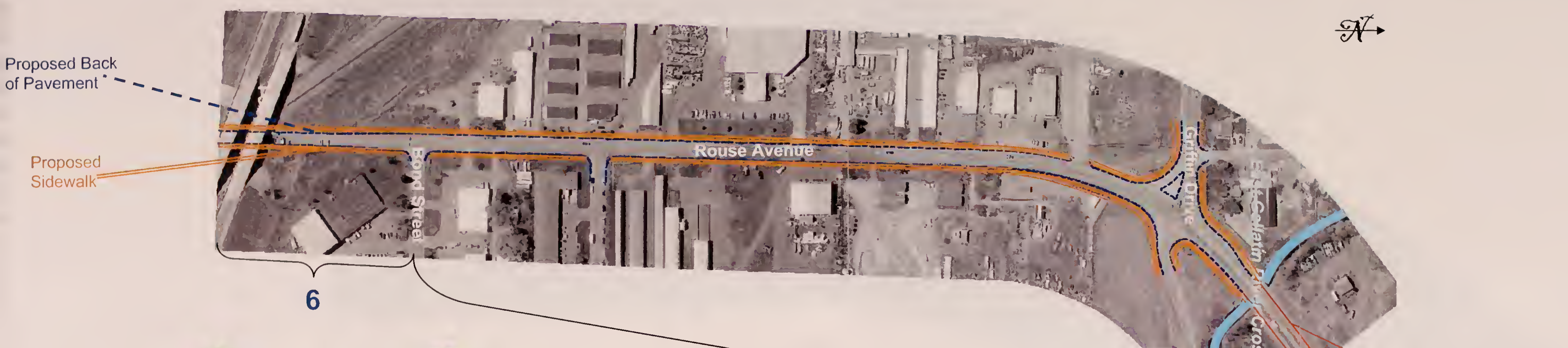
6



The two-way left turn lane was eliminated to fit the road under the I-90 overpass structure.

Notes:
Figure is not to scale.
Trees are not representative of final implementation.

Figure 2-8
Footprint of the Preferred Alternative
Page 3 of 4



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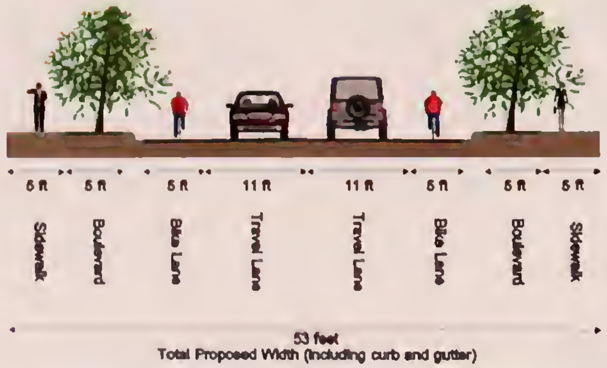
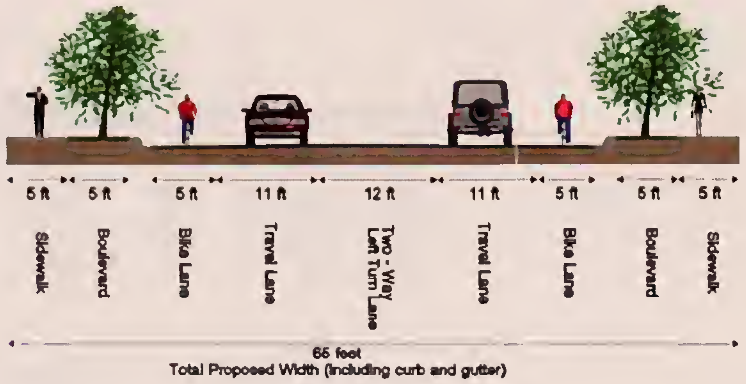


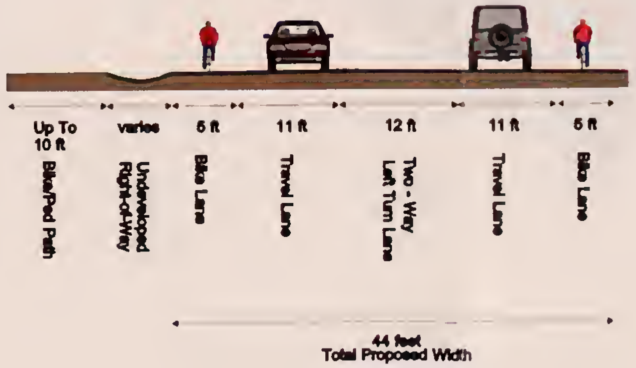
The two-way left turn lane was eliminated to fit the road under the I-90 overpass structure.

7



Full urban section

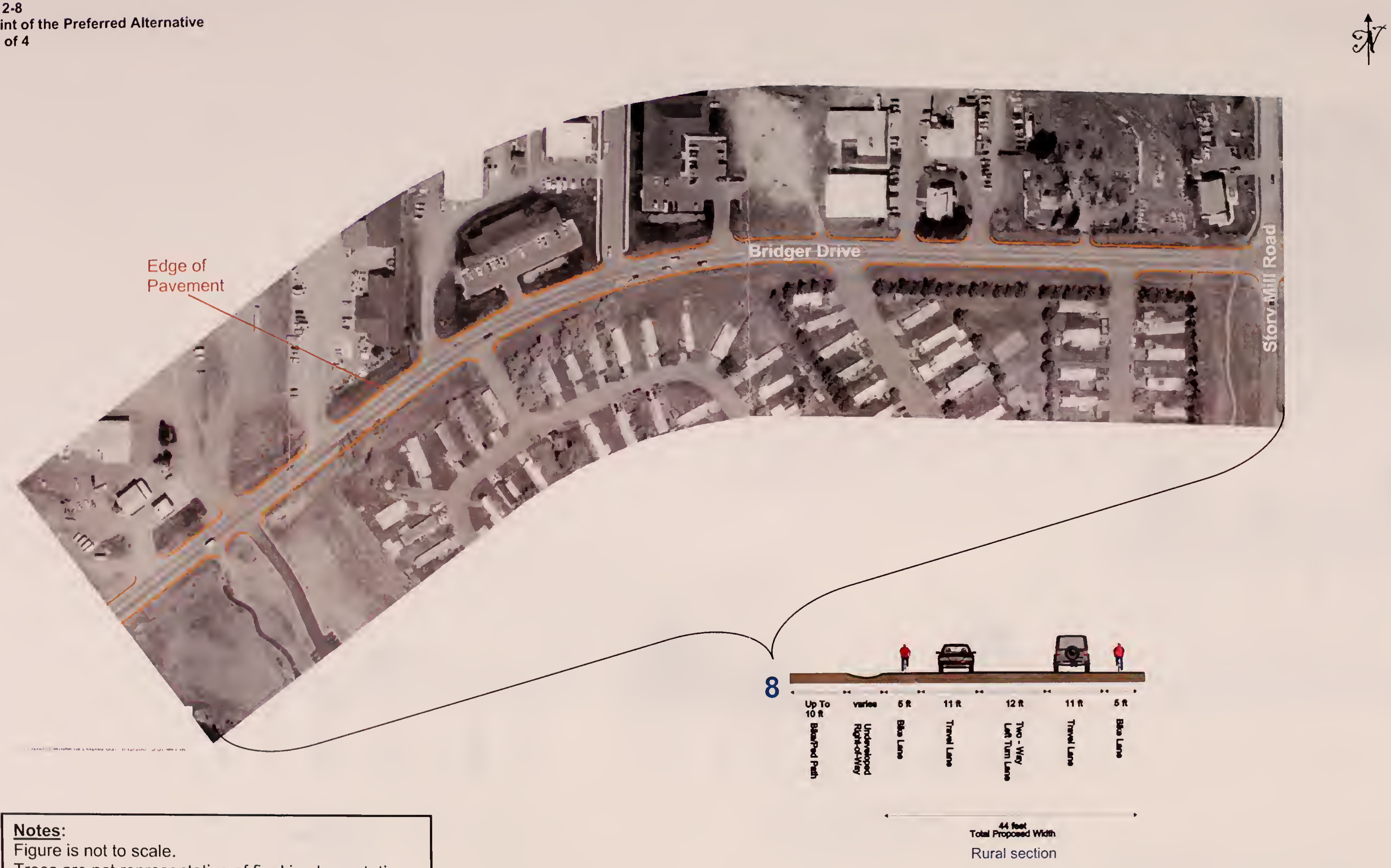
8



Rural section

Notes:
Figure is not to scale.
Trees are not representative of final implementation.

Figure 2-8
Footprint of the Preferred Alternative
Page 4 of 4



Notes:
Figure is not to scale.
Trees are not representative of final implementation.

2.4 Design Options

Parking

The need to perpetuate the availability of parking within the Rouse Avenue corridor is of recognized importance. The current availability for on-street parking was estimated based on an assumption of an average parking space length compared to the legal and usable space within the corridor. It is estimated that there are just over 100 on-street parking spaces available between Lamme and Tamarack (50 south of Peach and 50 north of Peach) which would be eliminated due to the Preferred Alternative.

This loss of on-street parking could be made up in one of three ways: 1) During right-of-way negotiations, MDT could provide financial assistance to individual property owners to construct a driveway on their residential property to replace lost parking; 2) MDT could identify private residential parcels (which would be acquired due to the overall right-of-way impacts from the proposed project) and convert those parcels into parking lots reserved exclusively for neighboring residents; 3) MDT could provide a combination of funding for private driveway development and parking lots to replace lost parking.

While it is premature to specify the approach to be used to replace lost parking, MDT is committed to working with individual property owners during final design and right-of-way acquisition to mitigate for the loss of on-street parking. More details on the resolution of this issue will be provided in the Finding of No Significant Impact (FoNSI) if the project is approved, and a Memorandum of Understanding between MDT and the City of Bozeman will be developed to outline future maintenance responsibilities for any parking lots constructed as part of this proposed project.

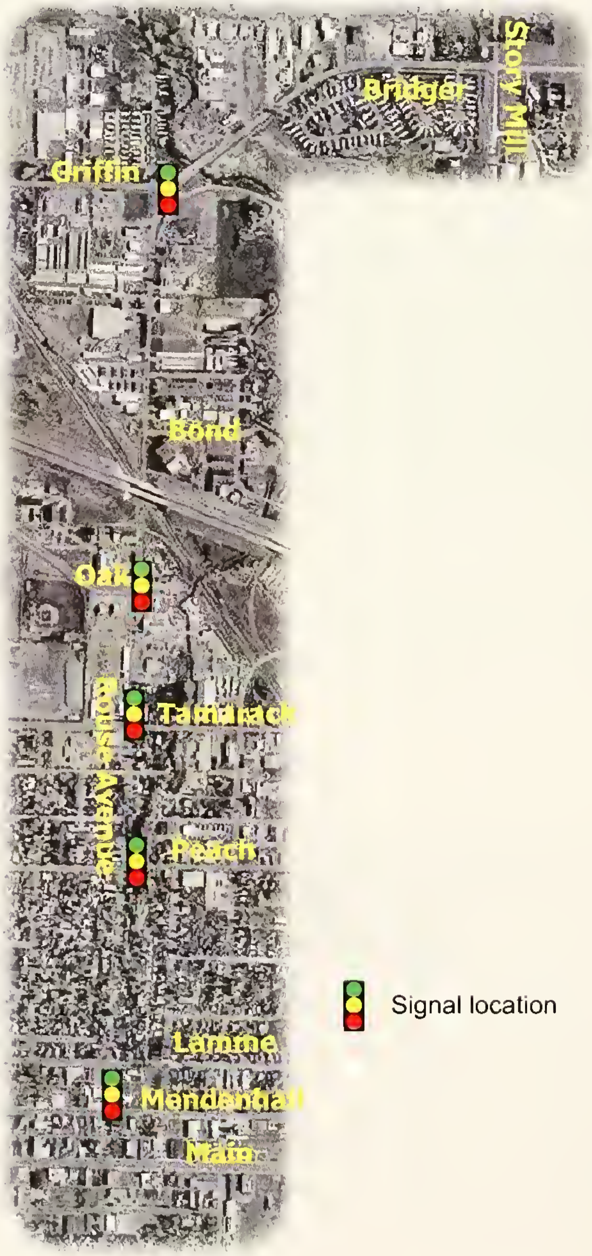
Traffic Control Options

Based on signal warrant analyses, traffic control devices need to be installed at Peach, Tamarack, Oak, and Griffin as depicted in Figure 2-9. In addition, the traffic signal at the intersection of Rouse and Mendenhall needs to be upgraded to current standards.

Roundabouts were considered individually at each of the intersections where a signal would be warranted. Roundabout capacity and delay analyses were conducted to determine capacity, Level of Service, and performance. The only intersection in the corridor where a roundabout intersection would function from an operational standpoint is at Rouse and Griffin. At this intersection, a single-lane roundabout would function adequately as a traffic control device; however, as the conceptual design was developed, the impacts to adjacent parcels and the cost for this traffic control measure were considered to outweigh the potential benefits. The roundabout option has been eliminated from further consideration at this location.

An additional traffic signal may be installed at Story Mill as a result of the proposed development south of Bridger Drive. The signal would be installed as a condition of approval by the City of Bozeman for the subdivision and would be completed separate from this project.

Figure 2-9
Proposed Intersection Traffic Control



2.5 Other Alternatives Considered But Eliminated

Transportation System Management

Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies focus on improving roadway efficiency, and typically overlap with Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies. The primary purpose of a TSM is to "get the most out of the existing system" through cost effective improvements such as adding auxiliary lanes in heavily congested portions of a corridor, and/or adding turn lanes at congested intersections, or optimizing signal timing throughout a corridor. Other options might include fringe parking, ridesharing, and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes.

FHWA has indicated in their Technical Advisory (TA 6640.8A) that these limited construction alternatives are "usually relevant only for major projects proposed in urbanized areas over 200,000 in population." Due to the limited population size of Bozeman, the short length of the roadway improvement project, and the diversity of commuting trips in this corridor, it was determined that a TSM alternative would not provide the necessary improvements in capacity to eliminate the need for other investments in capacity expansion. It is possible, however, that efficiencies can be gained through better signal timing along Rouse Avenue, and will be explored further if the project progresses.

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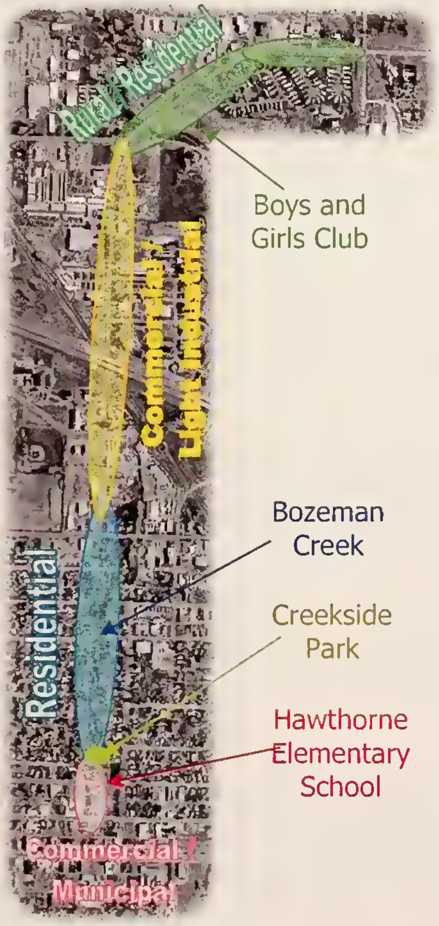
3.0 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

This chapter contains information on existing social, economic, and environmental resource conditions as well as impacts due to the proposed action. This information was developed in cooperation with state and federal agencies, Gallatin County officials, City of Bozeman staff, and members of the general public. NEPA/MEPA and the FHWA Technical Advisory (T6640.8A) outline the specific areas of environmental concern to be addressed through environmental analysis. Each of these specific areas are discussed in this chapter.

3.1 Land Use

The Project Team reviewed existing, on-going, and planned development within the corridor, and assessed the degree to which this proposed project may affect existing or planned land use in the project area. In addition to the information contained below, Section 3.20 also contains information regarding potential indirect impacts on land use.

Figure 3-1
Land Use



Consistency with Local Plans

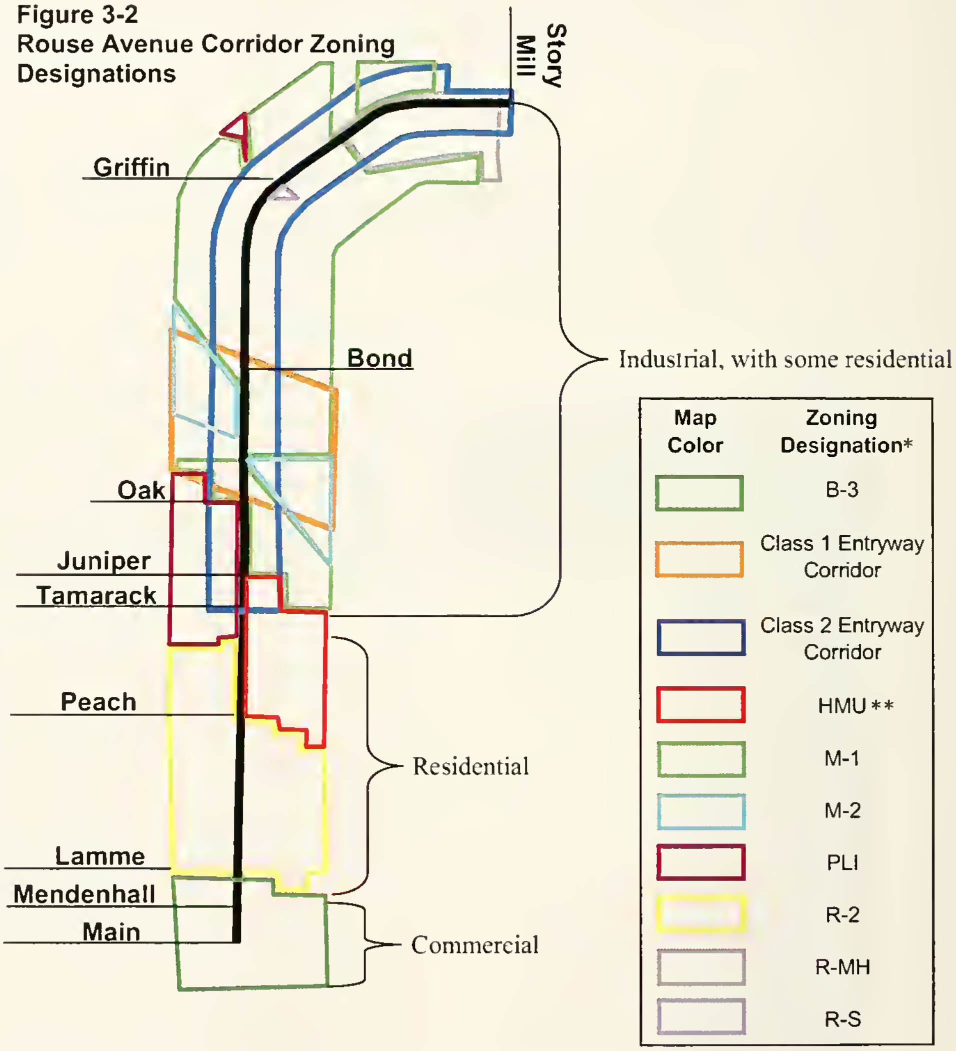
Rouse Avenue was nominated for improvements based on a need for improved capacity. The *Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan Year 2001 Update* (the *Plan*) identified the Rouse corridor from Main Street to Story Mill Road as a priority for reconstruction and widening to a three-lane arterial. The problem identified in the *2001 Plan Update* was "limited capacity, poor condition."

Maintaining community character is one of the Project Goals for the proposed project. As illustrated in Figure 3-1, land use is characterized by zones that can be characterized as commercial/municipal, residential, commercial/light industrial, and rural/residential. In the southern commercial/municipal zone, there are commercial retail establishments at the intersection of Main Street and Rouse Avenue. Also in this zone are several municipal buildings and the Hawthorne Elementary School. In the residential zone between Lamme and Tamarack Streets, land use is dominated by privately-owned single-family and multi-family residences. Impacts to these residences are detailed further in the Right-of-Way, Easements, and Relocations section later in this document. Several parks are located within a few blocks of this section of the corridor.

Between Tamarack and Griffin, Rouse Avenue can be characterized primarily as a commercial and light industrial zone. A mobile home development is located amidst commercial developments in the rural/residential zone at the north end of the corridor. The historic Story Mill is located just past the project terminus to the south of Bridger Drive. There are residential developments planned and under construction near the northern project terminus.

As shown in Figure 3-2, the area between Peach and Juniper Streets on the east side of Rouse Avenue is located within the Historic Mixed-Use Zoning District and the Northeast Urban Renewal District (NURD). The *Northeast Urban Renewal District Plan* (2005) was prepared in response to the City Commission's finding of blight on August 15, 2005. The *NURD Plan* is intended to remedy the conditions of blight and to ensure the vitality of the neighborhood. The *Plan* envisions a mixed-use neighborhood that is user-friendly, safe, secure, and healthy with a diversity of housing and businesses that maintain the unique ambiance and historic character of the District. The *NURD Plan* includes recommendations to enhance boulevards and public right-of-way by planting and maintaining trees and to provide a park that includes a children's playground and connectivity to adjacent wetlands and open space within the NURD, outlined in red in Figure 3-2.

Figure 3-2
Rouse Avenue Corridor Zoning Designations



****Northeast Urban Renewal District (NURD) encompasses HMU Zoning District in Figure 3-2.**

According to the 2005 Bozeman Zoning Map, the proposed project lies within the City of Bozeman Zoning Jurisdiction. The project area is located within or adjacent to ten City zoning designations. Figure 3-2 illustrates zoning in the area of the proposed project.

A short summary of the zoning follows:

- B-3 denotes the central business district.
- Class I and II Entryway Corridors are considered overlay districts and occur on arterials that "introduce visitors and residents alike to Bozeman." The Administrative Review Staff and/or Design Review board follow guidelines set forth by the City of Bozeman to review development in these corridors.
- HMU denotes a historic mixed use district, in this case the Northeast Neighborhood.
- M-1 and M-2 are manufacturing and light industrial zones.
- PLI denotes public lands and institutions. The section of the Rouse Avenue corridor that is zoned for public use contains both the MDT shops and the fairgrounds.
- R-2, R-MH, and R-S are residential zones.

The Preferred Alternative is consistent with current zoning.

Parks and Recreation / NL&WCF - Section 6(f) Lands, and Section 4(f) Properties

No National Land & Water Conservation Fund (NL&WCF) Act - Section 6(f) (16 U.S.C.460) lands have been identified within the vicinity of the proposed project. No acquisition of NL&WCF - Section 6(f) lands would occur, and there would be no impacts by the proposed project's Build Alternatives.

Section 4(f) of the Transportation Act provides protection of significant publicly owned public parks, recreation areas, or wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or any significant historic site unless a determination is made that:

- There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the property; and
- The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use.

The Preferred Alternative would impact one Section 4(f) property, the Hawthorne Elementary School. The proposed improvements would involve a minor encroachment on the historic site, though the proposed construction limits would not impact the building itself.

Mitigation

No mitigation is necessary for general land use issues, but refer to Chapter 4 for further descriptions of impacts and mitigation for the protected 4(f) resources.

3.2 Farmlands

The 1981 *Farmland Protection Policy Act* (FPPA) requires that the effects of proposed highway projects be examined before any farmland is acquired. The FPPA definition of farmlands includes all areas in non-urban use. This does not mean that these lands are currently in crop production, since the definition also includes forested, idle, pasture, open and recreational lands, as well as unpaved roads, rural residences and farm buildings. No analysis of farmland impacts was necessary since this project lies entirely within the urban built-up area of Bozeman.

3.3 Social

This section describes the general community characteristics and social conditions in the study area, including City and County population, demographic and income data, and community and public facilities. This section also addresses impacts on the traveling public and/or other users of the existing and proposed transportation facility, and/or impacts on community cohesion.

Population Data

The City of Bozeman has experienced continuous growth over the past 25 years. In 1980, Bozeman's population was 21,645. Bozeman grew to 22,660 in 1990, an increase of nearly five percent in ten years, or about half a percent per year. By 2000, Bozeman's population had reached 27,509, a 21 percent increase over the 1990 figure, just over one percent growth annually. Population estimates indicate that Bozeman grew by an additional 18 percent to reach 32,414 people in 2004, which corresponds to a rate of over four percent per year.

The City of Bozeman accounted for almost 28 percent of the growth that occurred in Gallatin County between 1990 and 2000 (4,849 people out of 17,368). Assuming Bozeman continues to maintain the same percentage of Gallatin County's overall population growth into the future, the community is projected to gain 6,418 residents between 2005 and 2025 for a total population of 38,832 in 2025 (NPA Data Services Inc.). This represents almost a 20 percent increase in population for the period 2005-2025. The annual average growth rate for the 20-year period 2005-2025 is projected to be approximately one to two percent. This projection is consistent with the figures used in the Greater Bozeman Area Transportation Plan Year 2001 Update, which includes moderate, high, and very high growth scenarios.

Demographic Composition

The majority of people in Bozeman (72.3 percent) are under the age of 40. Bozeman is predominantly white (over 95 percent), with a minority population between three and five percent.

Household Income

The median household income is $32,156 in Bozeman. Over 30 percent of Bozeman households earn less than $20,000 per year. The largest percentage of households in Bozeman (27 percent) earn between $30,000 and $49,999 per year.

Community and Public Facilities

There are several community facilities and public services located within the project area, including Creekside Park, Hawthorne Elementary School, the old Bozeman Public Library building, Bozeman Fire Station #1, the Bozeman Police Station, and Bozeman City Hall.

There would be no direct impacts to any of these structures; however, the Preferred Alternative would require acquisition of a portion of the Hawthorne School front lawn facing Rouse Avenue to accommodate widening of the roadway.

Travel/Access

Provision of a reconstructed and upgraded roadway under any of the Build Alternatives would result in improved access for all area residents, businesses, and travelers who rely on Rouse Avenue. These improvements would not be provided under the No-Build Alternative. The Preferred Alternative would enhance roadway operation and safety, accommodate the increasing travel volumes on the route, and satisfy minimum MDT design criteria. The proposed project would also improve the capacity of Rouse Avenue by organizing the flow of traffic turning movements.

Rouse Avenue is classified by the City of Bozeman as an Entryway Corridor. Along with 7th and 19th Avenues, it is one of the primary north-south routes into Bozeman and means of accessing the downtown business district. It is used as a truck route for downtown deliveries as well as businesses on Rouse Avenue.

The Preferred Alternative makes the residential portion of the Rouse corridor more pedestrian-friendly by integrating consistent sidewalks throughout the corridor and providing a narrow street width that allows pedestrians to cross the street more easily.

Mitigation

The Preferred Alternative is expected to have no effect on population growth, demographic composition, or income levels. It is anticipated to improve travel and access. No mitigation is required.

3.4 Right-of-Way, Easements, and Relocations

Right-of-way would be required throughout much of the corridor to accommodate the proposed improvements. Although the amount of new right-of-way would vary throughout the corridor due to the variable existing widths, it is estimated that approximately 1.4 acres of new right-of-way would be required and that a total of 78 parcels on both sides of the existing alignment would be affected by the Preferred Alternative. Relocations of at least two residences and one business would be required under the Preferred Alternative due to direct conflicts between the proposed construction limits and the existing structures. Additional relocations may be necessary and would be determined during right-of-way negotiations with individual property owners. Some of the areas acquired may become available for residential parking lots to replace the loss of on-street parking as indicated in Chapter 2 of this EA.

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 provide a summary of the proposed right-of-way impacts on residential and commercial properties in the corridor. These tables also provide a summary of the distance from the proposed edge of construction limits (or new sidewalk) to the existing residential or commercial structure at those addresses. Figure 3-3 illustrates those properties that would require full acquisition under the Preferred Alternative based on the unavoidable conflicts with the structures.

Table 3.1
Right-of-Way Impacts on Residential Properties

Full Acquisition*	0 to 5 feet from structure	5 to 10 feet from structure	10 to 15 feet from structure	15 to 20 feet from structure
540 N. Rouse	214 N. Rouse	318 N. Rouse	401 Lamme	327 N. Rouse
544 N. Rouse	314 N. Rouse	330 N. Rouse	513 N. Rouse	503 N. Rouse
	322 N. Rouse	404 N. Rouse	539 N. Rouse	512 / 514 N. Rouse**
	416 N. Rouse	424 N. Rouse	613 N. Rouse	515 N. Rouse
	534 N. Rouse	506 N. Rouse	808 N. Rouse	517 N. Rouse
	601 N. Rouse	526 N. Rouse		521 N. Rouse
		810 N. Rouse		530 N. Rouse
		816 N. Rouse		603 N. Rouse
		822 N. Rouse		605 N. Rouse
				616 N. Rouse
				620 N. Rouse
				621 N. Rouse
				704 N. Rouse
				722 N. Rouse
				802 N. Rouse

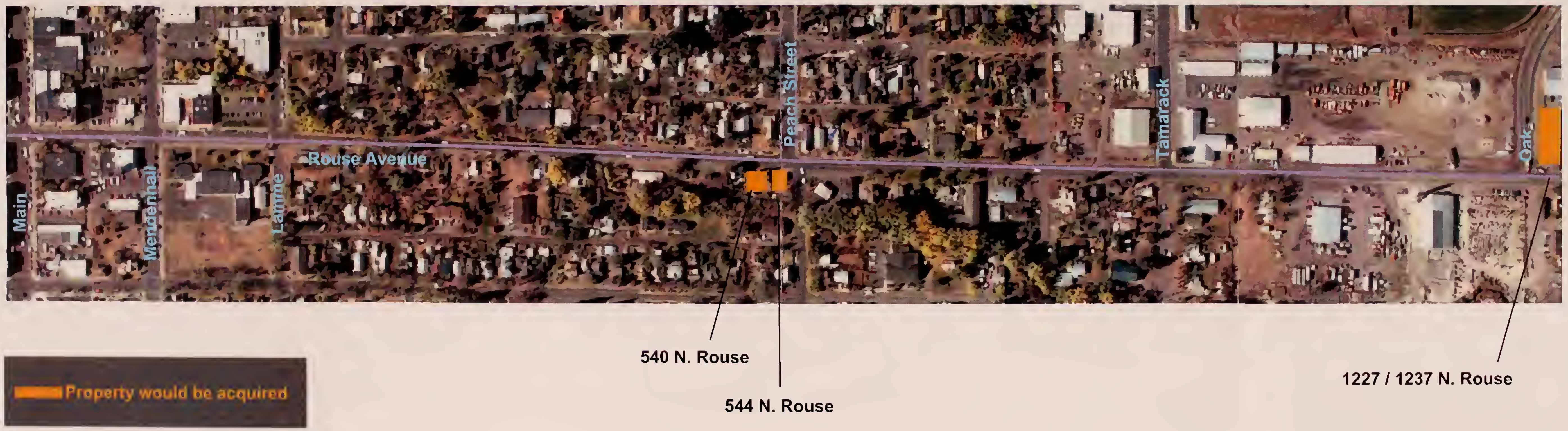
Notes: Residences not listed in this table lie in excess of 20 feet from the proposed construction limits.
* Full Acquisition implies that the existing structure is in conflict with the proposed construction limits.
** Same building

Table 3.2
Right-of-Way Impacts on Commercial Properties

Full Acquisition*	0 to 5 feet from structure	5 to 10 feet from structure	10 to 15 feet from structure
1227 (1237) N. Rouse**	321 Main	34 N. Rouse	907b N. Rouse***
	411 Main	39 N. Rouse	907c N. Rouse***
	101 N. Rouse	906 N. Rouse	
	109 N. Rouse		
	907a N. Rouse		
	907d N. Rouse		
	1301 N. Rouse		

Notes: Businesses not listed in this table lie in excess of 15 feet from the proposed construction limits.
* Full Acquisition implies that the existing structure is in conflict with the proposed construction limits.
** Two addresses because of a difference in physical and CAMA address
*** Different buildings.

Figure 3-3
Unavoidable Impact to Structures from the Preferred Alternative



Notes:
Figure is not to scale.

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Utilities

A number of public utilities have been identified within this corridor that may be impacted by the new right-of-way limits of the proposed project. These utilities include city water and sewer, electrical and telecommunications transmission lines, natural gas and petroleum pipelines, and cable television lines. Any utility relocation would be coordinated with the line's owner, and done prior to this proposed project's construction. Notification of service interruptions due to these relocations would be the responsibility of these utility lines' owners. Disruptions are normally minor and are usually limited to the customers on the affected lines.

Mitigation

There would be right-of-way acquisitions under the Preferred Alternative. All lands needed for right-of-way under the proposed action which are in private ownership would be acquired in accordance with both the *Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act* of 1970 (P.L. 91-646), and the *Uniform Relocation Act Amendments* of 1987 (P.L. 100-17). Compensation for right-of-way acquisitions would be made at "fair market value" for the "highest and best use" of the land.

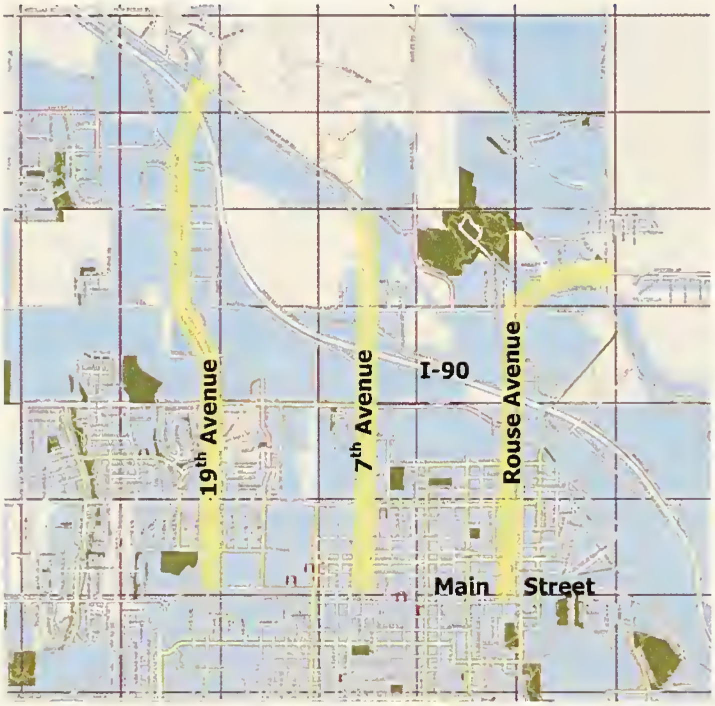
Both the local housing and rental market were researched to determine the effect of acquisitions. According to the Gallatin Association of Realtors, in 2006, the median home price in the corridor was approximately $200,000 and the average home price in Bozeman was approximately $258,000. According the U.S. Bureau of the Census, as of 2000, 94 percent of housing units in Bozeman were occupied, 43 percent by owners and 57 percent by renters. As of 2000, 700 properties were vacant, 46 percent of which were for rent, indicating that ample housing stock is currently available for relocated residents.

3.5 Economic Conditions

The Bozeman area is experiencing rapid economic growth. According to the Gallatin Development Corporation, approximately 4,545 firms operated in Gallatin County in the first quarter of 2005. This represents an increase of approximately 3.8 percent over 2004. Major sectors of the economy include retail, real estate, services, manufacturing, professional and technical, and construction.

The Rouse Avenue corridor provides access to Bozeman's downtown business district as well as a number of businesses along Rouse Avenue itself. As shown in Figure 3-4, Rouse Avenue, North 19th, and North 7th Avenues serve as the three main north-south routes in Bozeman. Because this corridor is key for access to businesses both along Rouse as well as downtown, improvements in this corridor would be expected to have a positive impact on economic conditions in Bozeman.

Figure 3-4
Bozeman North-South Corridors



Mitigation

Overall, the proposed action would have a favorable effect on the area's economic conditions. No mitigation is required.

3.6 Environmental Justice

Under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and related statutes, federal agencies are required to ensure that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, or religion.

Executive Order (E.O.) 12898 requires each federal agency to make achieving environmental justice part of its mission "by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low income populations."

There are three fundamental environmental justice principles:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.
- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
- To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

According to Census data, areas along the Rouse Avenue corridor are characterized by lower incomes, lower rates of homeownership, and older and less valuable housing stock. As shown in Figure 3-5, the following three Census Block Groups were analyzed for this proposed project:

> Census Tract 6, Block Group 1 Bordered by the Mill Ditch on the east, E. Peach Street on the south, N. 8th Avenue on the west, and E. Griffin Drive on the north. Rouse Avenue bisects this Census Block Group.
>
> Census Tract 7, Block Group 1 Bordered by Rouse Avenue on the west, Main Street on the south, I-90 on the east, and E. Peach Street on the north.
>
> Census Tract 7, Block Group 2 Bordered by Rouse Avenue on the east, Main Street on the south, N. 3rd Avenue on the west, and Peach Street on the north.

Although these Census Block Groups are larger than the study area for this EA, the Census figures relating to these areas provide an overview of general socioeconomic conditions in the corridor, as shown in Table 3.3. Census data were not considered for the portion of Bridger Drive between Griffin Drive and Story Mill because this area falls into a large Census tract that includes land far to the north and west of Griffin Drive. Data for this Census tract is not representative of the Rouse Avenue corridor.

Figure 3-5
Census Block Groups

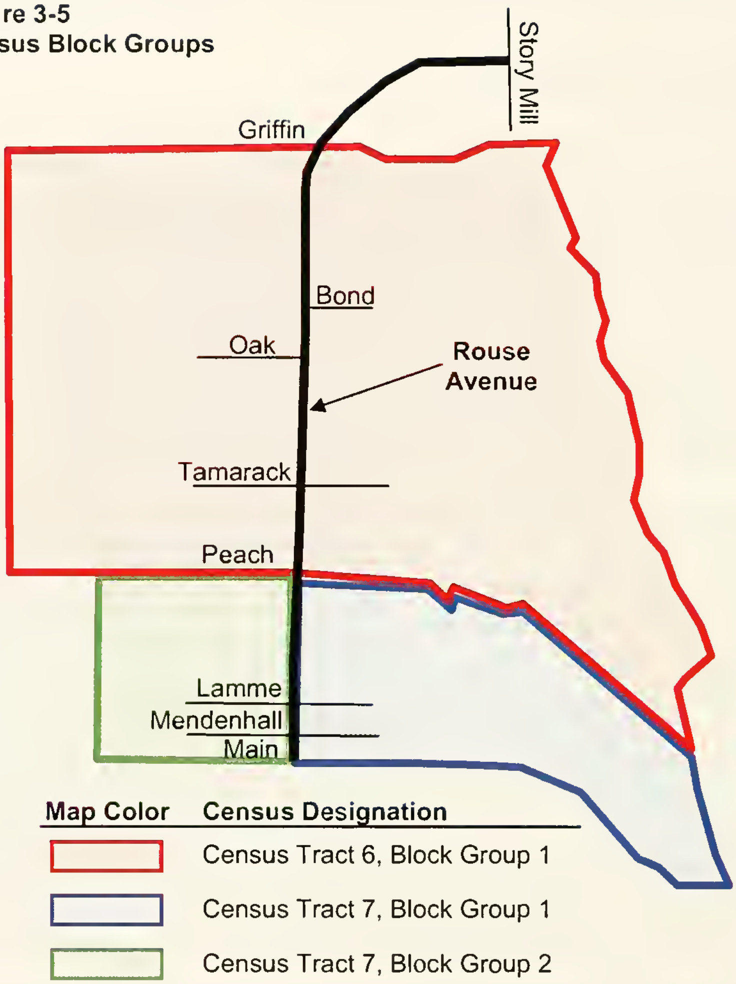


Table 3.3
Census Block Data

	Bozeman Median	Tract 6, Block Group 1	Tract 7, Block Group 1	Tract 7, Block Group 2
Median Age of Structure*	1973	1962	1948	1945
Income*	$32,156	$18,510	$22,467	$26,739
Homeownership*	42.9%	33.4%	36.5%	28.4%

*US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Mitigation
Right-of-way impacts are evenly distributed throughout the corridor, and two residences and one business would require full acquisition under the Preferred Alternative. From field observations and available data, it does not appear that these full acquisitions are either low-income or minority owned/occupied properties. Due to the limited number of acquisitions and the nature of these homes and businesses, both the No-Build Alternative and the Build Alternatives are in accordance with E.O. 12898, and would not create disproportionately high and/or adverse impacts on the health or environment of minority and/or low-income populations. These alternatives also comply with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000(d), as amended) under the FHWA's regulations (23 CFR 200).

3.7 Air Quality

The proposed project is located in an unclassifiable/attainment area of Montana for air quality under 40 CFR 81.327, as amended. As such, this proposed project is not covered under the EPA's "Final Rule" of September 15, 1997 on Air Quality Conformity.

The EPA has also identified a group of 21 Mobile Source Air Toxics (set forth in EPA's final rule, *Control of Emissions of Hazardous Air Pollutants from Mobile Sources*) and extracted six priority Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSATs) considered to be transportation toxics. The EPA has issued a number of regulations that will dramatically decrease MSATs through cleaner fuels and cleaner engines. According to an FHWA analysis, even if vehicle miles of travel (VMT) increase by 64 percent, reductions of 57 percent to 87 percent in MSATs are projected from 2000 to 2020.

Under the FHWA interim guidance issued for air toxic analysis in NEPA documents, the Rouse Avenue project would be classified as a minor widening project for which the ultimate traffic level is predicted to be less than 150,000 average vehicles per day. The EPA and FHWA have acknowledged technical shortcomings of emissions and dispersion models and uncertain science with respect to health effects and how this may prevent meaningful or reliable estimates of MSAT emissions and effects of specific projects. However, even though reliable methods do not exist to accurately estimate the health impacts of MSATs at the project level, it is possible to qualitatively assess the levels of future MSAT emissions.

Because the estimated VMT under both the No Build and Preferred Alternatives are nearly the same, varying by less than one percent, it is expected that there would be no appreciable difference in overall MSAT emissions between the alternatives. The roadway widening proposed as part of the Preferred Alternative would have the effect of moving some traffic closer to nearby homes, schools and businesses; therefore, there may be localized areas where ambient concentrations of MSATs could be higher than the No Build Alternative. This localized impact could be offset due to increases in speeds and reductions in congestion (which are associated with lower MSAT emissions).

Overall, EPA's vehicle and fuel regulations, coupled with fleet turnover, will over time cause substantial reductions that, in almost all cases, will cause region-wide MSAT levels to be substantially lower than today. Local conditions may differ from the national projections in terms of fleet mix and turnover, VMT growth rates, and local control measures; however, the magnitude of the EPA-projected reductions is so great (even after accounting for VMT growth) that MSAT emissions in the study area are likely to be lower in the future in nearly all cases.

Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

3.8 Pedestrians and Bicyclists

As explained in Chapter 1, pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the vicinity of the proposed project is currently limited (See Figure 1-4). Part of the Purpose and Need of the proposed project is to improve access and mobility in the corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Preferred Alternative would do this by providing consistent sidewalks throughout the urban portion of the corridor, consistent bike lanes throughout the corridor, and require a shared pedestrian/bicycle path through the rural portion of the corridor. All of these facilities in the urban portion would meet ADA requirements by providing a minimum five-foot sidewalk, 36-inch curb ramps, appropriate drainage in walking areas, and detectable warnings at cross walks.

The Preferred Alternative would include five-foot sidewalks through the entirety of the urban portion, from Main Street to the East Gallatin River crossing. To continue pedestrian facilities in the rural portion, the Preferred Alternative would include construction of a shared ten-foot pedestrian and bicycle path on the north side of Bridger Drive, and a recommendation that the City require adjacent private parcels to construct a similar path on the south as those parcels are developed in the future. Neither MDT nor any other governmental agency can construct on the south side without additional right-of-way or compensation to adjacent property owners.

During the development of alternatives, attempts were made to accommodate both a pedestrian trail and separated bike paths along both sides of the route in the rural portion of the corridor. This could not be accomplished without substantial right-of-way acquisition in order to comply with the City's current standards regarding a safe distance of separation between pedestrian and bicycle facilities and another roadway intersection. Construction of the path with adequate separation can be accomplished on the north side of Rouse in the rural portion, but would need to be constructed outside the roadway right-of-way on the south to provide adequate separation.

The Preferred Alternative would also include five-foot bicycle lanes throughout the corridor from Mendenhall to Story Mill Road.

The No-Build Alternative would not improve safety for pedestrians/bicyclists or motorists.

Mitigation

The Preferred Alternative would improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the corridor through the provision of bike lanes, ADA accessible sidewalks, and/or shared pedestrian/bicycle paths throughout the corridor. No mitigation is required.

3.9 Noise

This section provides a summary of the Traffic Noise Study report prepared for the proposed project (see list of Technical Reports in the Table of Contents of this document). The analysis was conducted in accordance with 23 CFR 772 and MDT *Traffic Noise Policy and Procedure Manual*, June 2001. According to the noise study report, seventy-five noise-sensitive receptors were identified within approximately 490 feet of the existing roadway centerline, including single-family residences, mobile homes, apartment buildings, a park, and an elementary school.

Traffic noise impacts are anticipated at seven receptors under the No Build Alternative and at 13 receptors under the Preferred Alternative.

According to the Federal Aid Policy Guide, *Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise* (23 CFR 772), this project is defined as a Type I project as a "proposed Federal or Federal-aid highway project . . . which increases the number of through-traffic lanes and therefore a noise analysis is required." The FHWA's Traffic Noise Model (TNM) Version 2.5 computer program was used to predict the traffic noise levels due to the No-Build Alternative and the project alternatives. Table 3.3 lists existing and predicted noise levels for the No-Build Alternative and the Preferred Alternative.

Table 3.4
Receptors and Predicted Noise Levels for the No-Build and Preferred Alternatives*

Receptor	Description	No-Build Alternative L_{eq}(h), Present Year 2005 (dBA)	No-Build Alternative L_{eq}(h), Design Year 2030 (dBA)	Preferred Alternative L_{eq}(h), Design Year 2030 (dBA)
MH1	Mobile home	60	63	63
MH2	Mobile home	61	64	64
R1	Single family residence	61	64	65
MH3	Mobile home	61	64	64
MH4	Mobile home	61	64	64
MH5	Mobile home	59	62	62
MH6	Represents two mobile homes	61	64	64
MH7	Represents two mobile homes	61	64	64
MH8	Represents two mobile homes	61	64	64
MH9	Mobile home	61	64	64
MH10	Represents two mobile homes	61	64	64
MH11	Mobile home	61	64	64
MH12	Mobile home	58	61	62
R2	Single family residence	60	63	63
R3	Single family residence	56	59	59
R4	Single family residence	62	65	65
R5	Single family residence	61	64	64
R6	Single family residence	62	65	65
R7	Single family residence	63	66	66
R8	Single family residence	63	66	66
R9	Single family residence	63	66	67

Table continues

Table 3.4
(Continued)

Receptor	Description	No-Build Alternative L_{eq}(h), Present Year 2005 (dBA)	No-Build Alternative L_{eq}(h), Design Year 2030 (dBA)	Preferred Alternative L_{eq}(h), Design Year 2030 (dBA)
R10	Single family residence	62	65	66
R11	Single family residence	62	65	65
R12	Single family residence	61	64	64
R13	Single family residence	61	64	64
R14	Single family residence	60	63	63
R15	Single family residence	61	64	64
R16	Single family residence	61	64	64
R17	Single family residence	61	64	65
R18	Single family residence	62	65	65
R19	Single family residence	62	65	65
R20	Single family residence	62	65	65
R21	Single family residence	61	64	64
R22	Single family residence	62	65	65
R23	Single family residence	62	65	65
R24	Single family residence	62	65	65
R25	Single family residence	63	66	66
R26	Single family residence	62	65	65
R27	Single family residence	63	66	66
R28	Single family residence	60	63	63
R29	Single family residence	61	64	64
A1	Apartment building	56	59	59
R30	Single family residence	60	63	63
R31	Single family residence	62	65	66
R32	Single family residence	61	64	64
R33	Single family residence	61	64	64
R34	Single family residence	62	65	65
R35	Single family residence	61	64	64
A2	Apartment building	62	65	65
R36	Single family residence	62	65	65
R37	Single family residence	62	65	65
R38	Single family residence	61	64	64
R39	Single family residence	60	63	63
R40	Single family residence	61	64	64
A3	Apartment building	60	63	63
R41	Single family residence	63	66	66
A4	Apartment building	57	60	60
R42	Single family residence	60	63	63
R43	Single family residence	62	65	66
R44	Single family residence	59	62	62
R45	Single family residence	62	65	65
R46	Single family residence	61	64	64
A5	Apartment building	56	59	59

Table continues

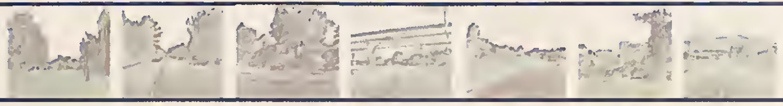


Table 3.4
(Concluded)

Receptor	Description	No-Build Alternative L_{eq}(h), Present Year 2005 (dBA)	No-Build Alternative L_{eq}(h), Design Year 2030 (dBA)	Preferred Alternative L_{eq}(h), Design Year 2030 (dBA)
R47	Single family residence	62	65	65
R48	Single family residence	62	65	65
R49	Single family residence	63	66	67
R50	Single family residence	62	65	66
R51	Single family residence	62	65	64
R52	Single family residence	62	65	66
R53	Single family residence	60	63	63
R54	Single family residence	62	65	64
R55	Single family residence	59	62	62
R56	Single family residence	62	65	66
P1	Creekside Park	59	62	62
S1	Hawthorne Elementary School	58	61	62

Source: Big Sky Acoustics, 2006
*Shaded cells indicate that the predicted traffic noise level meets or exceeds the traffic noise impact criteria (66 dBA).

Mitigation

Since traffic noise impacts were identified along Rouse Avenue, traffic noise abatement measures were considered, including modification of the Preferred Alternative, traffic management measures such as reducing the speed limit, the construction of noise barriers, and the use of quiet pavements.

Because the land adjacent to Rouse Avenue is heavily developed and the majority of the buildings are within approximately 60 feet of the existing centerline, shifting the roadway alignment would likely require additional right-of-way and removal of structures. Since the existing speed limit is already 25 mph, reducing the speed further would hinder the road's function as an urban minor arterial. The many driveways and cross streets intersecting Rouse Avenue would prohibit barriers from being effective, because the barriers could not be constructed to be continuous and long enough to block the line of sight to the road from receptor locations. Changes in the pavement surface to reduce the noise of vehicle tires rolling over the roadway are not effective on roads with vehicle speeds of approximately 30 mph or less. Accordingly, the evaluated mitigation measures are not practical or effective for the Rouse Avenue corridor.

3.10 Water Quality

The East Gallatin River is the discharge body for storm water, and is currently on the 303(d) list. The 303(d) list is defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as "waters where one or more applicable beneficial uses have been assessed as being impaired or threatened, and a TMDL [Total Maximum Daily Load] is required to address the factors causing the impairment or threat." A TMDL is a defined amount of a particular pollutant that can be released to a given water body per day.

The quality of runoff from roadways is impacted by vehicle-related contaminants, such as motor oil, grease, and tire rubber. In addition, surface water runoff is impacted by herbicides and pesticides that may be used in landscaped or maintained areas along the roadway.

The East Gallatin River is impaired by phosphorus and nitrogen, although no TMDL has been established yet for this stream. Because phosphorus and nitrogen are generally pollutants associated with residential fertilizer and pet waste rather than roadway pollutants in an urban corridor, no treatment for these pollutants would be provided as part of this roadway improvement project. Final design for the storm water treatment would be conducted in cooperation with the City of Bozeman.

There would be an increase in the total surface area of paved road related to widening and reconstruction. This increase in total road surface area decreases the overall permeability of substrate and increases the rate and quantity of surface water runoff from the roadway. However, reconstruction of Rouse Avenue on the existing alignment would likely improve water quality runoff relative to current conditions by meeting the City's MS4 requirements. The reconstructed roadway would meet these more rigorous standards (e.g. with respect to grade, surface water runoff controls, sedimentation, and erosion control), and reduce impacts to surface water quality due to erosion and siltation.

Mitigation

Storm water systems designed for the Preferred Alternative would use Best Management Practices (BMP's) to treat storm water before it enters the East Gallatin River.

3.11 Wetlands

There are no wetlands within the project site. Bozeman Creek is a perennial Water of the U.S. as a result of its connection to another Water of the U.S., the East Gallatin River.

Mitigation

The proposed project would not affect any wetlands within the project site because no wetlands were identified. Pursuant to regulations following the *Talent Water* decision, impacts to Bozeman Creek would require further coordination with the COE. Refer to Section 3.21, Permits and Other Regulatory Requirements, for a description of this coordination.

3.12 Floodplains

E.O. 11988 and FHWA's floodplain regulation (23 CFR 650, Subpart A) require an evaluation of any proposed action to determine if any of its alternatives encroach on the "base" floodplain. The base floodplain is defined as the area that is encompassed by the 100-year floodplain.

The study corridor was most recently described in a 1988 Flood Insurance Study (FIS). As illustrated in Figure 3-6, the portion of the corridor between Main and Lamme lies within the 100-year floodplain. A portion of the corridor between Griffin and Story Mill also lies within the 100-year floodplain. The FIS reports that "flooding can occur from Bozeman Creek in any season of the year." There are no major flood control structures on East Gallatin River, Bozeman Creek, or any of their tributaries. The FIS notes that "the bridges under Lamme Street and North Rouse Avenue do not have the capacity of upstream bridges. Flows from less than a 10-year flood will overtop these bridges."

There are four structures crossing water bodies within the project area. Three of these structures cross Bozeman Creek. The first is a single span, steel I-beam bridge that serves a single family residence. This bridge would be perpetuated unless MDT and the owners agree to arrange another means of access during the right-of-way acquisition phase of the project, in which case the structure could be eliminated.

There are two vertical abutment bridges (three-sided concrete structures) which convey Bozeman Creek. The first crosses under Rouse Avenue and the second crosses under Peach Street.

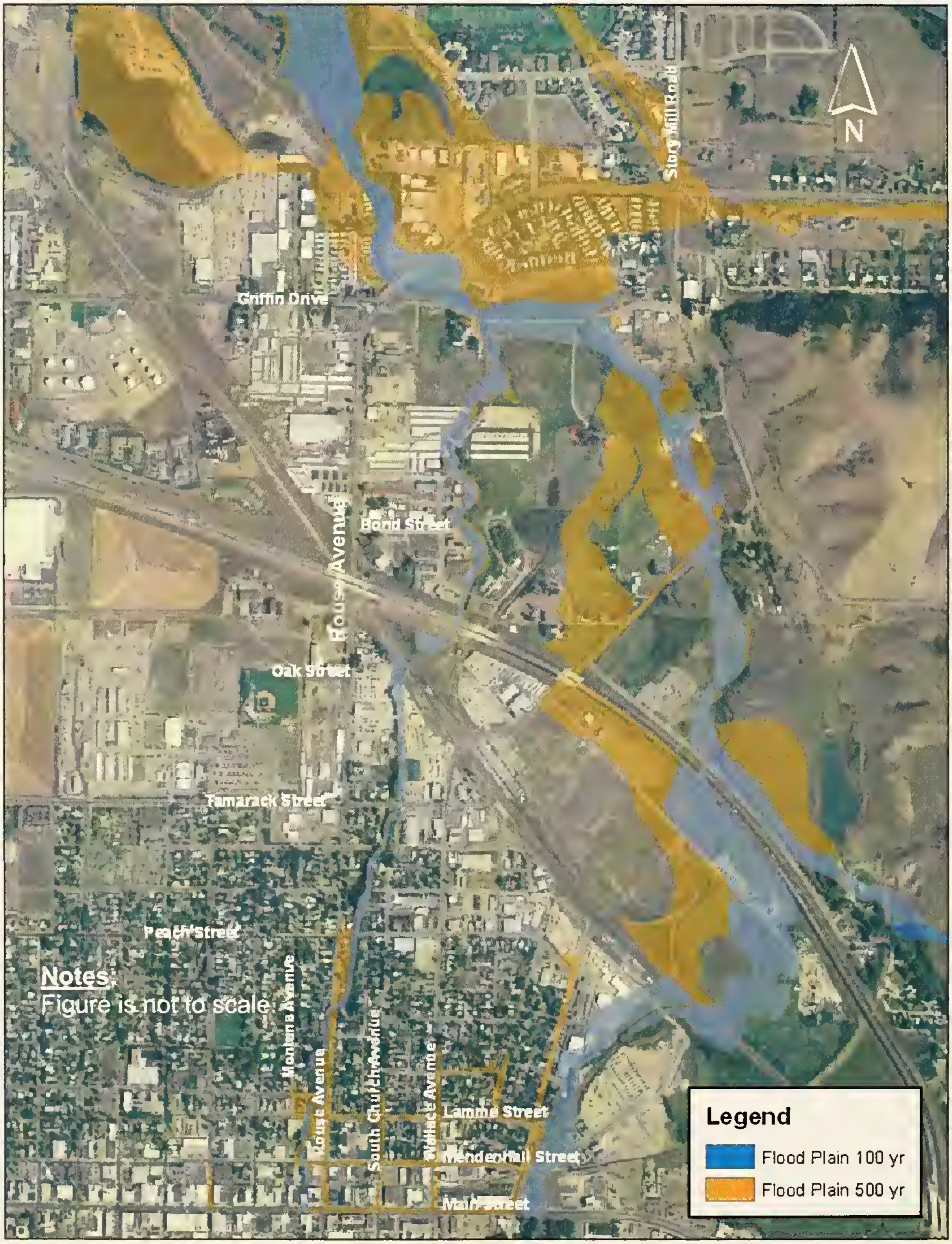
At the north end of the project, the recently replaced bridge over the East Gallatin River is in sound condition and would be used as is with minor modifications made to add a pedestrian crossing on the south side of the structure.

Mitigation

MDT and the City of Bozeman are currently discussing design options for future water conveyance structures that would improve overall hydraulic function and reduce flood risk. Impacts from all hydraulic design options would be consistent with those disclosed for the Preferred Alternative and would be designed to have no detrimental impact on the flood risk in Bozeman. Existing hydraulic conditions would be maintained or improved throughout the corridor through the installation of new conveyance structures agreed upon by MDT and the City of Bozeman, and in coordination with resource agencies.

No design or construction activities are contingent upon City action or approval of the conveyance structures; however, a floodplain development permit would be required for construction in the floodplain in the Rouse Avenue corridor and is available from the City of Bozeman.

Figure 3-6
Floodplains



3.13 Waterbodies, Wildlife Resources, and Habitat

The Biological Resources Report (BRR) prepared for the proposed project provides a detailed accounting of the terrestrial and aquatic species and species of concern that are known to occur or could occur within the proposed project area. The information below is a summary of potential impacts and mitigation measures for biological resources.

Wildlife Resources

Based on observations during the site investigation, several species of songbirds and birds of prey occur within the Rouse Avenue corridor. Although bird species use the vegetation along Rouse Avenue for roosting, foraging, breeding, and/or nesting, there is similar habitat available along waterways within one mile of the project site (Bridger and Rocky Creeks, East Gallatin River). Therefore the habitat along Rouse Avenue would not be considered "critical" for the survival of any specific avian species.

White-tailed deer and occasionally mule deer use stream corridors, backyards, and city streets within the Bozeman city limits as movement corridors and for access to water. No deer trails or tracks were observed within the investigation corridor. No other wildlife or signs were observed at the time of the investigation; however, small mammals such as squirrels, mice, skunk, rabbit, and raccoon also frequent the study area.

Eight species of fish are known to exist within the Rouse Avenue Bozeman Creek reach: brown trout, mottled sculpin, mountain whitefish, rainbow trout, long-nosed dace, long-nosed sucker, white sucker, and mountain sucker. All species except brown and rainbow trout are native. Brown trout and mountain whitefish are fall spawners (September-December), rainbow trout spawn in the spring-early summer (March-June), mottled sculpin spawn in early summer (May-June), white sucker spawn in June and the long-nosed sucker spawn from May to July.

Mitigation

There would be minimal impact to wildlife in the area of the study based on availability of adjacent habitat. To prevent direct impacts in the taking of migratory birds, nestlings, or eggs, it is recommended that tree removal occur before or after the nesting season (May 1 – August 1).

To avoid impacts to spawning fish, fish passage will be maintained and in-stream timing restrictions may be recommended by MFWP in coordination of the Stream Protection Act (SPA)124 process.

Habitat

The principle biological resources within the project site include a perennial stream and mature riparian and landscape vegetation. Migratory bird species, deer, and city-dwelling small mammals would be expected to use the corridor for activities such as watering, foraging, and roosting; however, the project corridor is already fully developed and presents very limited habitat. Ultimately, this corridor is not critical for their survival given the adjacency of other stream and river corridors of higher quality habitat.

Mitigation

Given that the habitat in the project corridor is not critical habitat for wildlife species that are present, no mitigation is necessary.

Species of Concern

Based on the historical and current information and results of the field survey, the proposed project would not impact any wildlife or plant species of concern.

Mitigation

None required.

Noxious Weeds

Nine species of noxious weeds were observed within the investigation corridor. They include Canada thistle, common tansy, Dalmatian toadflax, field bindweed, houndstongue, musk thistle, ox-eye daisy, poison hemlock, and spotted knapweed.

Mitigation

All construction activities are required to comply with the Montana Noxious Weed Law, MDT Standard Specification 107.11.5, titled Noxious Weed Management, follow the requirements of the Noxious Weed Management Act, Title 7, Chapter 22, Part 21, and any Gallatin County requirements.

3.14 Threatened/Endangered (T/E) Species

Based on the MNHP database reports, threatened, endangered, or proposed plant or animal species do not exist within the Rouse Avenue study area. It is likely that bald eagles occasionally fly over the site or use the mature trees as perches en route to other adjacent river corridors such as the East Gallatin River. Disturbance to any mature vegetation would have no effect to the viability of the threatened bald eagle.

Mitigation

It is determined that implementation of the proposed project would not affect any threatened or endangered plant or animal species; therefore, no mitigation is necessary.

3.15 Hazardous Wastes

Several Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites were identified in the records search performed for the study area. One active site is an MDT facility located at 907 N. Rouse. One well at this site had benzene at 7.7 parts per billion (ppb) in 2000, above the water quality maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 5.0 ppb. Two other inactive LUST sites were closed prior to the formation of the Closure Committee in 1997. These two sites are Gene Ballinger at 917 Bridger Drive, and Farmers Union Central Exchange at 318 Griffin Drive. Telephone conversations with individuals involved with the sanitary sewer replacement work on Rouse Avenue in 2004 indicate no petroleum contamination was identified.

Discussions with MDT personnel at 907 N. Rouse Ave. indicate that traffic paint had been historically dumped at this location. Previous construction activities on Oak Street, immediately north of the MDT property, yielded soil samples that contained chromium.

Mitigation

If the proposed project is approved and constructed, a field engineer will be on-site and observe excavations adjacent to the sites of concern in case any contaminated soils are encountered. Disposal of any soils potentially contaminated with chromium or hydrocarbon fuel compounds would be done in accordance with guidance and approvals obtained from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), which are decided on a case-by-case basis. Special provisions would be written into the construction contract for the proposed project to address handling of contaminated material in the event it is encountered. Additionally, petroleum resistant pipe materials would be utilized in areas where contamination is encountered, as recommended by the Montana DEQ in Technical Document #16.

3.16 Cultural/Archaeological/Historic Resources

According to a Cultural Resources Inventory (and re-evaluation) prepared for the proposed project, there are a total of 10 historic sites in the Rouse Avenue corridor. Three of these sites are potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as individual sites, and the remainder are considered contributing to the North Rouse Avenue Historic District in the 500 Block of Rouse Avenue. Two sites within the corridor were previously listed: the Bozeman Hotel (24GA1739) and the Northern Pacific Railway Main Line (24GA1096). These 10 total sites are listed in Table 3.5 and illustrated in Figure 3-7.

Sites that are recommended NRHP eligible have been avoided wherever possible. Where complete avoidance was not possible, the conceptual design was modified to minimize the potential impacts.

A copy of the SHPO concurrence on these cultural resource impacts is contained in Appendix A.

Table 3.5
NRHP-Eligible Sites and Findings of Effect

Site*	Site Number	Effect
321 E. Main (Bozeman Hotel)	24GA1739	No Effect
102 N. Rouse (Hawthorne School)	24GA1688	No Adverse Effect
North Rouse Avenue Historic District		
503 N. Rouse Avenue	24GA1701	No Adverse Effect
507 N. Rouse Avenue	24GA1703	No Adverse Effect
513 N. Rouse Avenue	24GA1704	No Adverse Effect
515 N. Rouse Avenue	24GA1705	No Adverse Effect
517 N. Rouse Avenue	24GA1706	No Adverse Effect
521 N. Rouse Avenue	24GA1707	No Adverse Effect
526 N. Rouse Avenue	24GA1709	No Adverse Effect
Northern Pacific Railway Main Line	24GA1096	No Effect

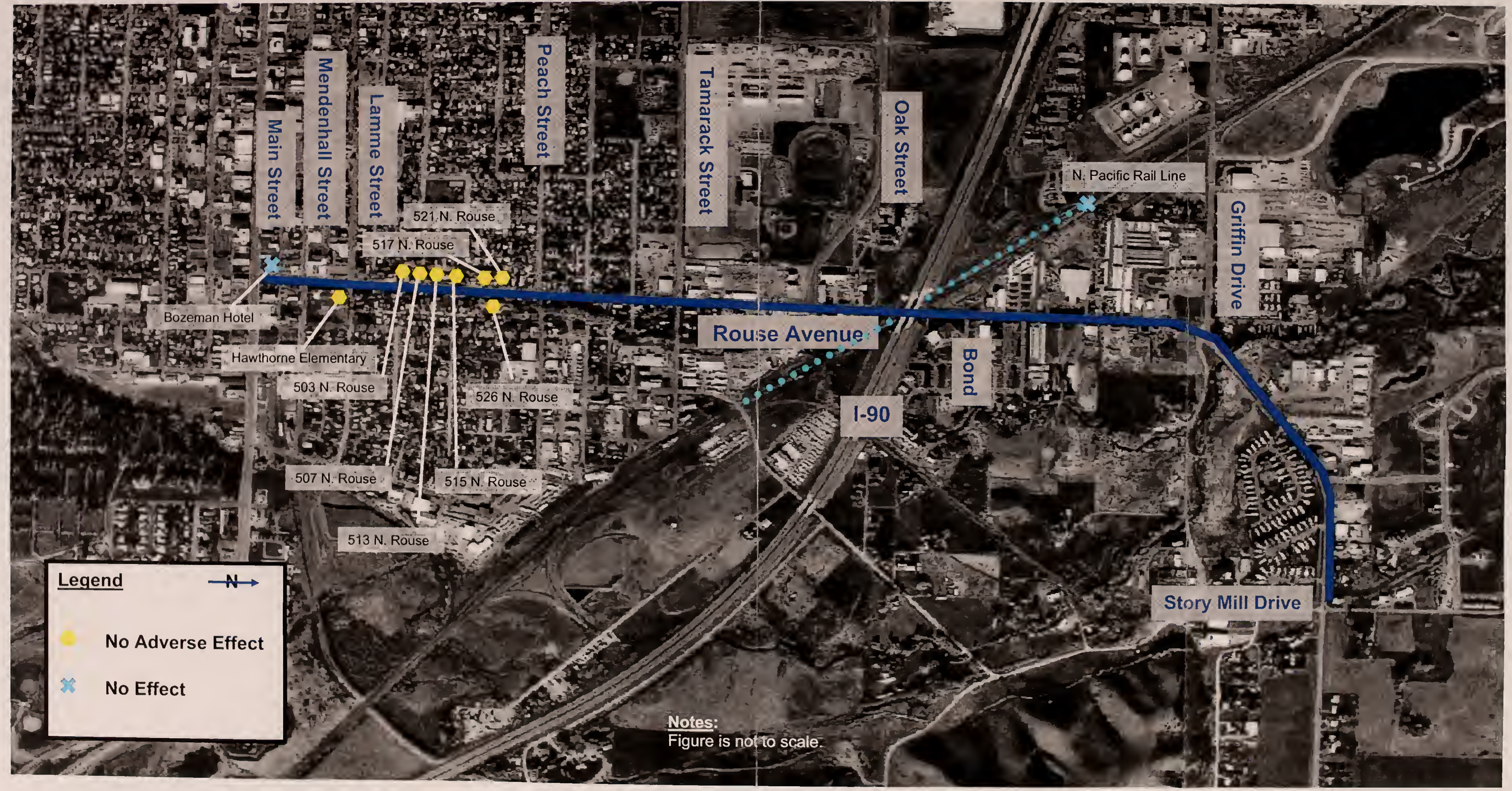
*Slaughter Rental was also reviewed in the Determination of Effect, but is outside the Area of Potential Effect for this proposed project, and is not discussed further in this EA.

Full descriptions of impacted properties are provided in Chapter 4 - Section 4(f) Resources.

Mitigation

No mitigation required.

Figure 3-7
Historic Resources



Notes:
Figure is not to scale.

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3.17 Visual

For the purposes of this discussion, the project area has been divided into four segments, each with distinct landscape characteristics. Following the descriptions of these four segments, there is a also a brief discussion of woody vegetation in the corridor, which is a visual resource on Rouse Avenue and in Bozeman's Northeast Neighborhood and would be impacted by the project.

Intersection with Main Street to Intersection with Lamme Street

This segment of Rouse Avenue is located in the downtown business district. Older, multi-level commercial buildings line much of Main Street, restricting peripheral views. Mountains are visible in the distant background south of the intersection of Rouse and Main. A few trees are scattered along the street to the north and in a small park located on the southwest corner of the Rouse and Main intersection. Within this segment, the street is fairly wide and lined with sidewalks on either side.

Rouse and Main

Intersection with Lamme Street to Intersection with Tamarack Street

Rouse and Lamme

This is a predominantly residential segment characterized by older houses with relatively shallow setback distances. Mature trees line both sides of the street, limiting peripheral views and creating a feeling of enclosure along this segment of the corridor. The street width narrows midway between the intersections at Lamme and Peach Streets due to the proximity of the Bozeman Creek, which closely parallels Rouse Avenue throughout most of this segment. The street widens again just south of Peach Street, allowing slightly less restricted views of the street and bordering residences. Mountains are visible in the extended background view to the north.

Intersection with Tamarack Street to Intersection with Griffin Drive

This segment is characterized by commercial and light industrial development, with utility poles and large buildings closely lining the street. Vegetation in this segment thins considerably, although mature trees still border this segment of Rouse Avenue. The open nature of this segment affords more expansive peripheral views of the skyline and foreground views north to the mountains. Approaching the intersection with I-90 from the south, the immediate foreground view is dominated by the overpass structure. North of I-90, the foreground again expands, allowing broad views of the sky and mountains to the north.

Rouse and Tamarack

Intersection with Griffin Drive to Intersection with Story Mill Drive

This segment is characterized by mixed commercial and residential development. Traveling northeast from the intersection of Rouse and Griffin Drive, the foreground view is dominated by mountains. The roadway is relatively wide and vegetation along this segment is generally set back from the roadway, allowing broad peripheral views. Developments in the southwest portion of this segment, including commercial buildings and the Boys and Girls Ranch, are also set back from the roadway. Peripheral views narrow northeast of the bridge over the Gallatin River where a large mobile home park is located closer to the street.

Bridger Drive

Vegetation in the Corridor

Vegetation within the Rouse Avenue corridor was inventoried within 150 feet of the existing shoulders between Main Street and Griffin Drive. Nearly 100 vegetation species and over 30 tree species were identified and inventoried. Nearly 650 trees of varying type, size, and maturity were inventoried within the 150 foot range on either side of the existing alignment, with just over 400 lying within 50 feet of the existing alignment.

The Preferred Alternative would require construction disturbance and/or new right-of-way of varying widths throughout the corridor. This disturbance area varies between 15 and 30 feet on either side of the existing transportation facilities. It is not possible to identify impacts to specific trees until more detailed plans are developed; however, it is estimated that over 125 trees could be impacted directly due to the construction activities associated with the Preferred Alternative.

Mitigation

The proposed project is anticipated to have an overall positive effect on the visual character of the corridor through the construction of landscaped boulevards through the residential portions; however, there will be a notable loss of large tree cover in the immediate vicinity of the existing roadway. The City of Bozeman's arborist would be consulted during preliminary engineering to evaluate the condition of existing trees and ensure that appropriate consideration is given to trees and reasonable measures are taken to minimize impacts to these resources. The arborist would also be asked to propose potential mitigation strategies for unavoidable impacts to trees within the corridor. According to a June 2006 phone conversation with Elizabeth Galli-Noble, who represents the Bozeman Tree Board, the Board would like to work with MDT to ensure that trees are replanted within the corridor post-construction. The Tree Board has offered to write grants to partially fund the cost of the replanting. To that end, the Tree Board has asked to be kept apprised of project development progress, in advance of construction, to have time to write grants for tree-planting.

3.18 Construction Impacts

Construction activities from the proposed Build Alternatives would cause temporary inconveniences to area residents and businesses. These would occasionally result in longer travel times, detours, temporary closures, and noise and dust due to the use of heavy machinery. These disruptions would occur intermittently throughout the construction period. The existing roadway would remain in use for continued access during the construction process; therefore, traffic interruptions would be minimized.

Mitigation

Asphalt plants and gravel crushers that may be required for roadway construction for any of the alternatives would require air quality permits to be obtained by the contractor. Construction activities are also required to use dust suppression and control measures to minimize short-term impacts related to construction dust.

There would be minor, temporary noise impacts related to construction of any of the alternatives. The project's contractor would be subject to all state and local laws to minimize construction noise by having mufflers on all equipment. Dust control would also be implemented by using either water, or another approved dust-suppressant. During construction, surface water runoff could be contaminated by spills of petroleum products, lubricants, and hydraulic fluid from construction equipment. There would be a spill prevention and emergency containment plan made to provide for mitigation of any impacts related to such spills. In general, BMP's would be used to minimize the effect of sedimentation and/or runoff during the roadway construction periods.

There is potential for short-term water quality impacts due to increased erosion and sedimentation during construction activities. Mitigation of these impacts is achieved through engineering controls, such as grading, revegetation, and various BMP's. These mitigation measures would be included in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to ensure that any impacts are minimal. Field monitoring/oversight would be planned.

Given the volume of traffic and the fully developed residential, retail, and commercial areas along this route, MDT will require a staging and construction sequencing plan to ensure that reasonable access is maintained to all residents and businesses during construction. All advance warning and detour signing would be in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Therefore, construction impacts from any of the proposed Build Alternatives would be minimized.

3.19 Cumulative Impacts

This section provides a general assessment of impacts from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects in the area surrounding the proposed Rouse Avenue project that may have additive impacts on the social, economic, and environmental impacts identified in this EA. The Rouse Avenue corridor has been substantially modified by development, and over 100 years of residential, commercial, and light industrial land uses. Through this corridor, Bozeman Creek has been channelized and the banks completely armored concurrent with public and private development projects over the past century.

More recent projects located near the Rouse Avenue corridor are identified below.

- *Sanitary Sewer Installation* – the City of Bozeman replaced the sewer line under Rouse Avenue from Main Street to Griffin in 2004.
- *Traffic Flow Reconfiguration* – the City of Bozeman reconfigured Rouse between Babcock and Main Street from a north-bound one-way to a two-way street in 2005.
- *Rouse Avenue Overlay* – MDT Maintenance completed an overlay on Rouse Avenue from Main to MP 2.9 in 2005.
- *Rouse Avenue Overlay* – MDT Maintenance completed an overlay on North 7th from Main to Griffin in 2006.
- *Main Street – Grand Avenue to Haggartey Lane* is a mill, overlay, seal, and coat project. Estimated to be completed in the summer of 2008.
- *Bozeman Citywide Signal Upgrade (STPP-CM 1299(14))* is a signal upgrade project, mostly on Main Street. Estimated to be completed in the summer of 2008.
- *East Bozeman Interchange Wetland Mitigation* is a wetland development project located directly adjacent to the East Main Interchange. The estimated letting date is spring 2009.
- *I-90 Bridge Replacement* is a project to replace the I-90 bridge over Rouse Avenue. The estimated letting date is summer 2010.
- *Griffin Drive - N 7th to Rouse (CN 6256)* is a seal and cover project. The estimated letting date is summer 2009.

In addition to the above MDT and City of Bozeman projects, there are housing developments planned at the north end of the corridor. City records have also been reviewed which identified over 70 projects completed, planned or permitted from 2003 through 2007. There are an additional 250 projects in various stages in the general vicinity of the Rouse Avenue corridor. None of these projects, which range from signing approvals to small building remodels or additions, would have a cumulative effect on the Rouse corridor.

Based on the fact that Rouse Avenue is in a highly developed corridor and that the proposed project is not anticipated to induce new growth or development, the proposed roadway improvements are not anticipated to individually or cumulatively, when considered with the other projects, have any substantial cumulative impacts.

3.20 Indirect Impacts

Indirect impacts from this proposed project range from the loss of on-street parking to increased stormwater runoff from the increased pavement width. These indirect impacts are fully addressed through design considerations discussed previously in this EA. Other indirect impacts may be those related to a change in land use from improvements to this route.

Over the past decade, there has been a substantial amount of research conducted on the indirect effects of transportation improvements on land use. There are basically two schools of thought on the subject: that the addition of roadway capacity induces new growth and results in increased congestion, or that construction of additional roadway capacity is merely a response to the historical land consumption trends and patterns which have favored suburban decentralization and dispersion. In practice, neither is wholly accurate. Land use and transportation are inextricably intertwined and frequently cyclical in nature with improved accessibility increasing land values, land values affecting their use, changing uses affecting the need for transportation investments, roadway improvements further changing access and so on.

It is also important to recognize that the effects of transportation in facilitating physical development are not necessarily the same as its effects on economic growth. If a region is growing economically, development will occur somewhere within or near it. Combined with the effects of land use and zoning policies which are controlled by each local jurisdiction, transportation investments may influence the location of growth, but they alone do not cause the growth.

Traffic on Rouse Avenue has been growing at a rate of about 2.8 percent a year. This growth rate is anticipated to continue regardless of any improvements on Rouse itself. Induced travel is a term used by economists to describe the additional demand for travel that occurs as the generalized cost of travel decreases.[1] The theory of induced vehicle travel suggests that increases in carrying capacity of a specific highway corridor would result in an increased level of vehicle traffic due to a decrease in the cost of travel, especially the time-costs of travel. Generally, induced travel applies to new highway carrying capacity; for example, the widening of a highway to improve LOS. Rouse Avenue is already defined as an Entryway Corridor by the City of Bozeman and is the major north-south thru-way on the east side of the City. Improving LOS on this road is not anticipated to induce growth; rather, it would maintain access for residents, commercial traffic, and recreational users.

Research compiled by the Transportation Research Board indicates that transportation variables are no more critical to location decisions than such factors as housing type, size, and cost, as well as real or perceived differences in neighborhood characteristics such as crime rates and the quality of schools. Moreover, lifestyle and life-cycle variations have been found to be equally important as (and in some cases much more important than) transportation determinants of location and land use choices.

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[1] FHWA. 2005. Induced Travel: Frequently Asked Questions. http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/itfaq.htm

The urban portion of the Rouse corridor is already built-out and does not provide the opportunity for infill growth. The northern, or more rural portion of the corridor, has some room for growth. Since the project lies entirely within the city limits, the direction of future growth will be determined more by zoning and permitting by the City of Bozeman than by the widening of Rouse Avenue.

Based on this information, this project will not induce significant land use changes or promote unplanned growth. There will be no significant effect on access to adjacent properties or present traffic patterns.

3.21 Permits and Other Regulatory Requirements

The proposed action would be in compliance with both the water quality provisions of 75-5-318 M.C.A. for Section 318 authorizations, and stream protection under Sections 87-5-501 through 509 M.C.A., inclusive. An on-site review of the proposed project area would be conducted with representatives from regulatory agencies if necessary. All comments, suggestions, and/or conditions resulting from review of existing data and/or on-site inspections would be documented, included in the proposed project's files, and taken into account in the final design specifications.

The proposed action would require the following permits or authorizations:

- A Section 402/Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) authorization from the DEQ's Permitting & Compliance Division. The Preferred Alternative would require new right-of-way and require an MPDES construction phase permit, which is issued in response to the 1987 re-authorization of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1251-1376, as amended). The Clean Water Act requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to institute a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program for storm drainage systems or to approve the state's programs. EPA approved Montana's program in 1987.

  Obtaining the MPDES permit requires development of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that includes a temporary erosion and sediment control plan. The erosion and sediment control plan identifies BMP's as well as site-specific measures to minimize erosion and prevent eroded sediment from leaving the work zone.

- Section 404 Permit and SPA124 notification. The project would impact limited reaches of Bozeman Creek, a perennial Water of the U.S. These impacts would be limited to small areas of bank disturbance upstream and downstream of locations requiring bridge and culvert replacement. Best Management Practices would be followed to prevent dirt and debris from entering the stream where adjacent to construction activities. All necessary permits and notifications would be required prior to the commencement of any disturbance to the streambed or ordinary high-water marks.

- Floodplain development permit. Though the project would not impact flood conditions in the City of Bozeman, a floodplain development permit would be required because work would be conducted in the floodplain.

All work would also be in accordance with the Water Quality Act of 1987 (P.L. 100-4), as amended.

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4.0 SECTION 4(f) *DE MINIMIS* IMPACT DETERMINATION

Section 4(f) was created when the U.S. Department of Transportation was formed in 1966. It was initially codified in the U.S. Code at 49 U.S.C. 1653(f) (or Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966). Later that year, 23 U.S.C. 138 was added. In 1983, Section 1653(f) was reworded and recodified at 49 U.S.C. 303. These two statutes have no real practical distinction and are still commonly referred to as "Section 4(f)."

Section 4(f) declares that "[i]t is the policy of the United States Government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites."

Section 4(f) specifies that "[t]he Secretary [of Transportation] shall not approve a transportation program or project . . . requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State, or local significance, or land of an historic site of national, State, or local significance (as determined by the Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park area, refuge, or site) unless:

1) there is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land; and

2) the program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from the use."

Congress amended Section 4(f) in 2005 when it enacted the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Section 6009 of SAFETEA-LU added a new subsection to Section 4(f), which authorizes FHWA to approve a project that results in a *de minimis* impact to a Section 4(f) resource without the evaluation of avoidance alternatives typically required in a Section 4(f) Evaluation. Section 6009 amended 23 U.S.C. 138 to state:

> The requirements of this section shall be considered to be satisfied and an alternatives analysis not required if the Secretary determines that a transportation program or project will have a *de minimis* impact on the historic site, parks, recreation areas, and wildlife or waterfowl refuges. In making any determination, the Secretary shall consider to be a part of the transportation program or project any avoidance, minimization, mitigation, or enhancement measures that are required to be implemented as a condition of approval of the transportation program or project. With respect to historic sties, the Secretary may make a finding of *de minimis* impact only if the Secretary has determined in accordance with the consultation process required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act that the transportation program or project will have no adverse effect on the historic site or there will be no historic properties affected by the transportation program or project; the finding has received written concurrence from the State Historic

Preservation Officer; and the finding was developed in consultation with the parties consulted under the Section 106 process.

4.1 Coordination

As discussed in the EA for this proposed project, one historic NRHP-eligible property would be impacted by the Preferred Alternative. *As stated in the Guidance for Determining De Minimis Impacts to Section 4(f) Resources* (FWHA 2005), SHPO must concur in writing with the Section 106 "no adverse effect" determination and must be informed that FHWA intends to make a *de minimis* finding based on the Section 106 effect determination. Consulting parties under Section 106 must also be informed of the *de minimis* finding. MDT submitted a letter to coordinate with SHPO requesting a determination of effect on several properties in the Rouse Avenue corridor. SHPO concurred with the "no effect" and "no adverse effect" determinations on each property listed in the corridor (see correspondence in Appendix A). FWHA subsequently made a *de minimis* finding with respect to the Hawthorne Elementary School and the Northern Pacific Railroad. Since that time, it has been determined that the railroad crossing could be accommodated within the existing right-of-way resulting in no "use" of this Section 4(f) property.

There would be no parks, recreation areas, or wildlife or waterfowl refuges that would be converted to a transportation use by the Preferred Alternative.

4.2 Proposed Action

The proposed action is a capacity improvement project on Rouse Avenue and a portion of Bridger Drive within the City of Bozeman. The work would include widening of the roadway, turnbays at major intersections, boulevards, sidewalks, handicap-accessible ramps, curb and gutter, signing and pavement markings, facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, and new traffic control at key intersections. The purpose of the proposed project is to increase the capacity of Rouse Avenue to improve vehicular Level of Service (LOS) and enhance bike and pedestrian travel within corridor.

4.3 Section 4(f) Properties

There are 11 properties in the Rouse Avenue corridor that are protected by Section 4(f) including historic buildings, a historic rail line, and a park. Table 4.1 identifies each property and their orientation on the east or west side of Rouse, their eligibility for protection, and the proposed impact on each resource. Figure 4-1 illustrates the location of each protected property.

Table 4.1
Properties Protected by Section 4(f)

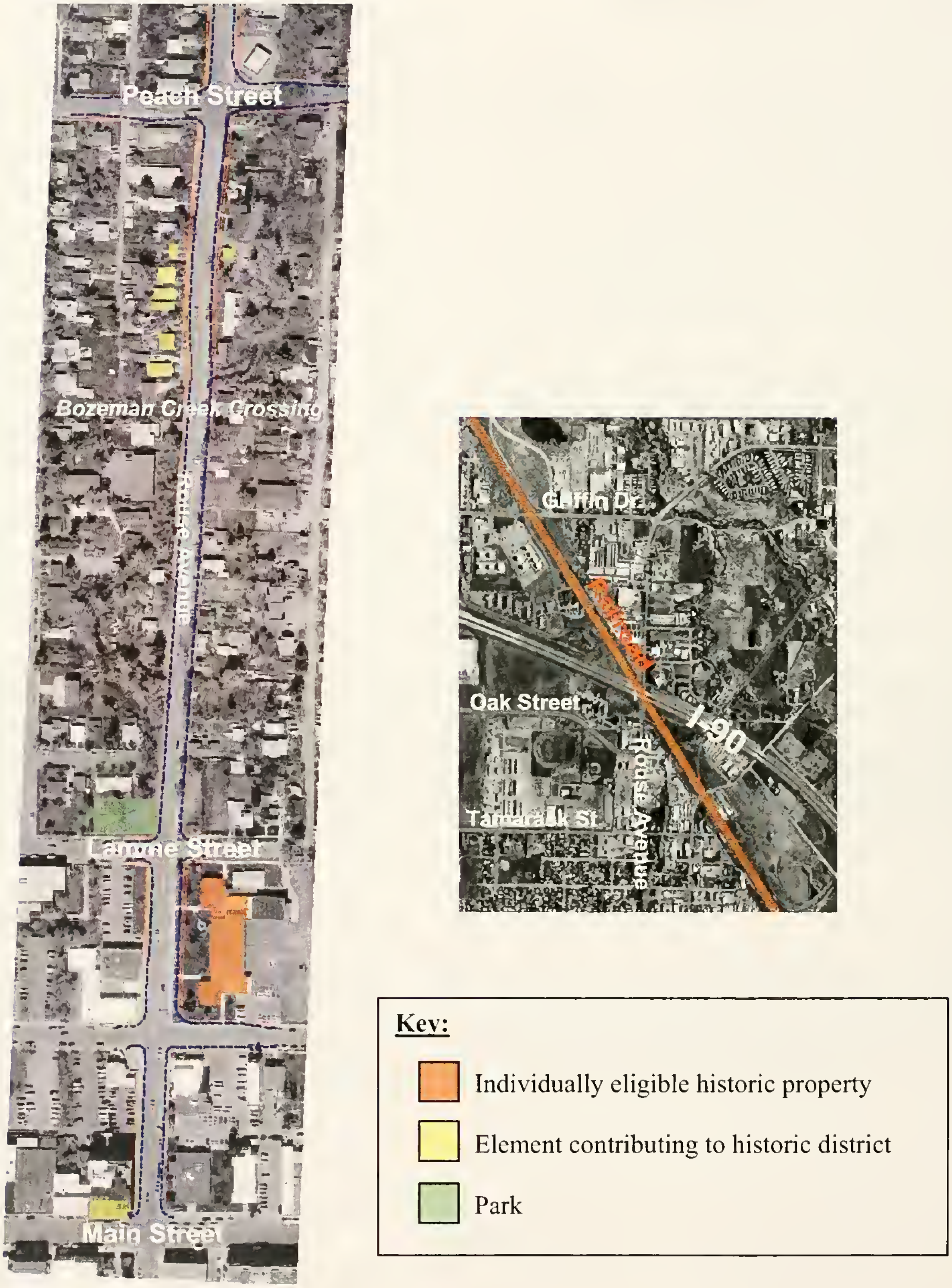
Property (and orientation to Rouse)	Site No.	Type of Structure	Eligibility	Effect
321 E. Main (west)	24GA1739	Bozeman Hotel	Contributing	No Effect
102 N. Rouse (east)	24GA1688	Hawthorne School	Individually	No Adverse Effect
Creekside Park (west)	- na -	Park	Park	No Effect
North Rouse Avenue Historic District:				
503 N. Rouse Avenue (west)	24GA1701	House	Contributing	No Adverse Effect
507 N. Rouse Avenue (west)	24GA1703	House	Contributing	No Adverse Effect
513 N. Rouse Avenue (west)	24GA1704	House	Contributing	No Adverse Effect
515 N. Rouse Avenue (west)	24GA1705	House	Contributing	No Adverse Effect
517 N. Rouse Avenue (west)	24GA1706	House	Contributing	No Adverse Effect
521 N. Rouse Avenue (west)	24GA1707	House	Contributing	No Adverse Effect
526 N. Rouse Avenue (east)	24GA1709	House	Contributing	No Adverse Effect
Railroad Main Line (intersecting)	24GA1096	Northern Pacific	Individually	No Effect

All impacts to the Bozeman Hotel and Creekside Park are completely avoided by the proposed project, and no new right-of-way would be required from the Northern Pacific rail line. Right-of-way would be required from several residential parcels contained within the North Rouse Avenue Historic District, but these impacts are not considered a Section 4(f) use since the historic designation is limited to the homes themselves and not the properties as a whole.

Impacts to the Hawthorne Elementary School property are discussed in the following section.

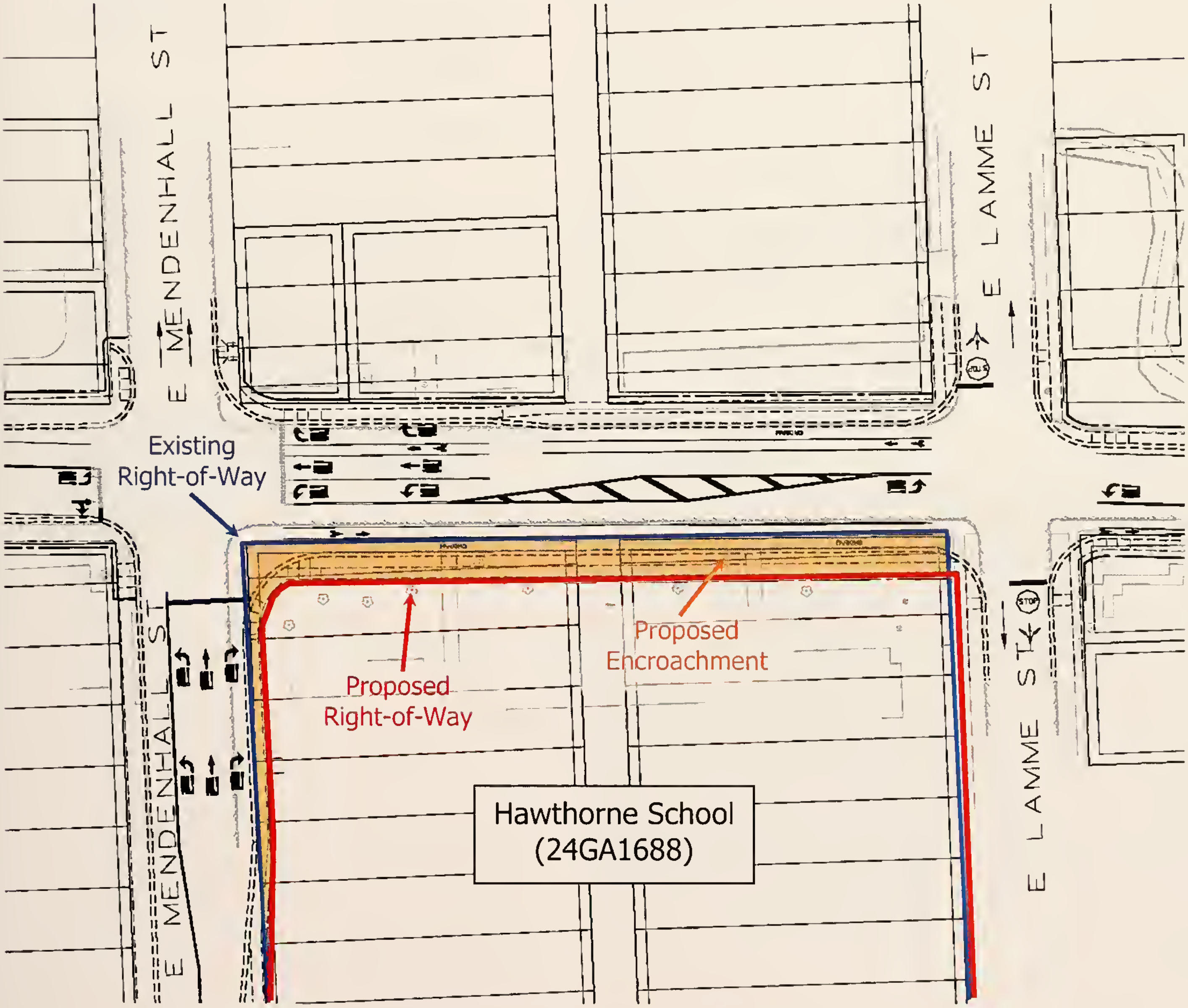
MDT has coordinated the proposed impacts to these historic properties with SHPO (see correspondence in Appendix A).

Figure 4-1
Properties Protected by Section 4(f)



Hawthorne School

Impacts to the Hawthorne School property are limited to a right-of-way encroachment necessary for the installation of a landscaped boulevard which is included in this portion of the corridor at the request of the school. This encroachment will impact the front yard of the school and will not disrupt any public recreational use of the property, nor impact the historic character of the site. Proposed impacts to the Hawthorne School property are illustrated below. MDT has coordinated with the Hawthorne School regarding the encroachment and their desire to have a landscaped boulevard included in the proposed project in their portion of the corridor. Documentation of this coordination is included in Appendix A.



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5.0 LIST OF PREPARERS AND REVIEWERS

The responsibilities and qualifications of the consultant team that prepared the Rouse Avenue Environmental Assessment are listed below:

List of Preparers

Preparer/Affiliation	Role	Education and Experience
Phil Odegard, P.E. HKM Engineering	Project Management, Roadway Design	B.S., Civil Engineering. Over 25 years experience in civil engineering design including transportation, municipal, and hydraulic engineering.
Darryl L. James, AICP HKM Engineering	Environmental Process Management, NEPA/MEPA Compliance, Public Participation	M.P.A., with an Environmental Concentration; B.A., Public Affairs and Political Science. Senior consultant with over 18 years of professional experience. Expertise in transportation planning, NEPA analysis, and technical report writing.
Sarah Nicolai HKM Engineering	Document Preparation	B.A., Civil Engineering (ongoing). Over four years of legal and policy-related experience. Professional focus on planning and environmental documentation.
Tyler J. Schott HKM Engineering	Document Preparation	B.A., Civil Engineering (ongoing). One year of environmental analysis and documentation experience. Professional focus on transportation planning and environmental documentation.

Agency representatives responsible for review of the Environmental Assessment are listed below:

List of Reviewers and Decision-Makers

Preparer/Affiliation	Role	Education and Experience
Theodore G. Burch Program Development Engineer FHWA	Lead Agency	B.S. Civil Engineering, Masters of Engineering – Structures, Program Development Engineer and Team Leader for the statewide program areas of planning, environment, safety and design, right-of-way, and materials. 19 years experience in highway engineering, environmental review and program/project management.
Jeffrey A. Patten Operations Engineer FHWA	Lead Agency	B.S., Construction Management, 16 years experience in highway engineering, planning, environmental review, traffic analysis, and program/project management
Jeffrey M. Ebert, P.E. Butte District Administrator MDT	Lead Agency	B.S., Civil Engineering. Six years experience in construction project management and estimating. Seventeen years in highway planning, engineering, and program management.
Joe Olsen, P.E. Butte District Engineering Services Engineer MDT	Lead Agency	B.S. Geological Engineering. Over 20 years experience in highway planning, engineering & design; construction; and project & program management/development.

Gabe Priebe, P.E. Consultant Project Supervisor MDT	Lead Agency	B.S., Civil Engineering, B.A. Mathematics. Seven years experience in construction, highway engineering, planning level safety analysis and project management.
Tom S. Martin, P.E. Bureau Chief, Environmental Services MDT	Lead Agency	B.S. Civil Engineering - Over 14 years experience in design and management of transportation facilities.
Heidy Bruner, P.E. Engineering Section Supervisor - Environmental Services MDT	Lead Agency	B.S. Environmental Engineering, approximately 10 years environmental engineering design and management.

6.0 DISTRIBUTION LIST

Federal Agencies

U.S. Department of the Interior
Fish & Wildlife Service
Montana Field Office, 100 N. Park, Suite #320
Helena, MT 59601
Attn: Mark Wilson, Field Supervisor

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Washington, DC 20240

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region VIII, Montana Office
Federal Building, 10 NW 15th Street, Suite 3200
Helena, MT 59626-0096
Attn: John F. Wardell, Director

U.S. Department of the Interior
Fish & Wildlife Service
2900 4th Avenue North, Room 301
Billings, 59101-1266
Attn: Lou Hanebury, Biologist

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
215 N.17th Street
Omaha, NE 68102-4978

State Agencies

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
1520 East 6th Avenue, P. O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901
Attn: Steve Welch, Administrator
Permitting & Compliance Division

Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation
1625 11th Avenue
P.O. Box 201601
Helena, MT 59104-0437
Attn: Mary Sexton, Director

Montana Environmental Quality Council
Office of the Director
Capitol Post Office
P. O. Box 215
Helena, MT 59620

Montana Governor's Office
Executive Office
Room 204, State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620-0801
Attn: Brian Schweitzer, Governor

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
1410 8th Avenue
P.O. Box 201202
Helena, MT 59620-1202
Attn: Stan Wilmott, Historian

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1420 East Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
Attn: M. Jeff Hagener, Director
Glenn R. Phillips, Chief of Habitat and
Protection Bureau Fisheries Division

Montana Transportation Commission
902 Parkhill Drive
Billings, MT 59101
Attn: William T. Kennedy, Chairman

Montana State Library
1515 East 6th Avenue, P.O. Box 201800
Helena, MT 59620-1800
Attn: Roberta Gebhardt
Collections Management Librarian

Local Agencies

City of Bozeman
411 East Main
P.O. Box 1230
Bozeman, MT 59771-1230
Attn: Chris Kukulski, City Manager

Gallatin County
311 West Main, Room 208
Bozeman, MT 59715
Attn: Greg Sullivan, Planning Director

Bozeman City Library
220 East Lamme
Bozeman, MT 59715

7.0 COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

7.1 Public Agencies

MDT contacted the following agencies and parties in preparing this EA.

Agencies with Jurisdiction and/or Permitting Authority

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP, reviewed "Determinations of Effect")
City of Bozeman (FEMA Floodplain Development Permit, Weed Control District)
Department of the Interior - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ, MPDES authorization)
State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO, reviewed/concurred with "Determination of Effect")
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Other Agencies, Groups, or Persons Contacted

Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC)
U.S. Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

7.2 Cooperating Agencies

In accordance with the provisions of 23 CFR 771.111(d), MDT requested that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (CoE), Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP), Gallatin County Roads and Bridge Department, and the City of Bozeman participate in the development of this project as Cooperating Agencies. No formal responses were received from any agency regarding these requests.

7.3 Public Involvement

Public Meetings

The first public scoping meeting for this proposed project was held in Bozeman on December 7, 2005. The meeting took place from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm in Bozeman at the Bozeman City Hall. Approximately 12 people attended the meeting. The meeting format included an open house, formal presentation, and a question/comment period. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project and gather public opinion regarding issues and concerns related to transportation in the Rouse Avenue corridor.

A second public information meeting was held at the Bozeman Senior Center on January 25, 2006. The meeting took place from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm, and was attended by approximately 27 people. The meeting format included an open house, formal presentation, and a question/comment period. The purpose of the meeting was to update the public on the progress of the project since the first meeting, explain the NEPA/MEPA process, and to continue to solicit public opinion regarding issues and concerns related to the Rouse Avenue corridor. A substantial portion of the meeting was devoted to soliciting public comments about the project.

A separate meeting was held on January 25, 2006, prior to the public meeting, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for the Northeast Neighborhood Association (NENA) group, a coalition of local residents. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the proposed project with the residents who would be most affected by the project and their opinion regarding issues and concerns related to the Rouse Avenue corridor.

A third public information meeting was held May 31, 2005. The meeting took place from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm, and was attended by approximately 47 people. The meeting was held at Hawthorne Elementary School. The purpose of the meeting was to present possible alternatives for the proposed widening of Rouse Avenue and to seek input from the public. Members of the public attending the meeting were asked to rank the importance of potential design choices in the corridor. These included not piping Bozeman Creek, bike lanes, and parking. Project design alternatives were presented at this meeting.

Press Releases and Mailings

Press releases and display ads were issued for public meetings. Advertisements were submitted to the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* and set to run on Sunday Nov. 27, Wednesday Nov. 30, and Sunday Dec. 4, but due to unexplained reasons did not run. An additional Scoping Meeting was then scheduled and held on January 25, 2006. Ads were run on Sunday, January 15, 2006 and Friday, January 20, 2006 for the January 25, 2006 meeting. These display ads ran in the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle.*

A display ad for the May 31, 2005 meeting ran in the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* and was coordinated by the MDT Public Information Office. A press release was also sent to other local radio stations including: KBOZ, KBZM "The Eagle," KISN FM, KMMS, KZMY, as well as local television stations including: KTVM, KUSM, KGLT.

Tracy Oulman, the Neighborhood Coordinator for the City of Bozeman, was responsible for inviting people to the NENA meetings held on January 25, 2006 and October 24, 2006. In addition, a newsletter was developed and handed out at an April, 2006 NENA meeting.

HKM Engineering Inc. invited representatives from pedestrian and bicycle groups to the June 20, 2006 meeting via a combination of email and phone calls.

Website

A project website was established for this proposed project. This site includes a description of the proposed project, a proposed schedule, project newsletters, and opportunities to provide comment. The site also has links to MDT and HKM Engineering.

Organizational Meetings

At the request of local pedestrian and bicycle groups, a meeting was held to discuss pedestrian and bicycle issues in the corridor on June 20, 2006. Representatives of these local groups were encouraged to share their ideas about how to best incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities into the corridor design.

A representative of the design team attended a Northeast Renewal District Meeting on October 10, 2006. A representative of the team preparing the EA attended a NENA meeting on October 24, 2006. At each meeting, a project update was given and there was an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions.

Additional Public Involvement Events

A Public Hearing will be conducted to obtain comments on this Environmental Assessment while the document is out for public review and comment. Notice of availability of this document as well as the notice for the Public Hearing has been placed in the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*. Public Hearing notices have also been sent to everyone on the project mailing list, and the notice has been posted on the project website at http://www.hkminc.com/Rouse/Default.asp

Comments on the EA can also be provided via the internet by logging onto the MDT web page at www.mdt.mt.gov. There is a "Public Involvement" pull-down menu, and a tab for "Review/Comment on Environmental Documents." The Rouse Avenue project will be listed in the "Open for Comment" section of this page for the duration of the public comment period.

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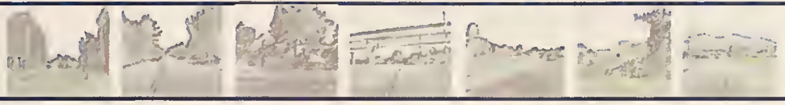

APPENDIX A: SECTION 4(F) COORDINATION AND SHPO CONCURRENCE

This appendix includes copies of SHPO coordination letters, concurrence on eligibility and determinations of effect, and coordination letters with the Hawthorne Elementary School regarding the impacts to the protected Section 4(f) property.

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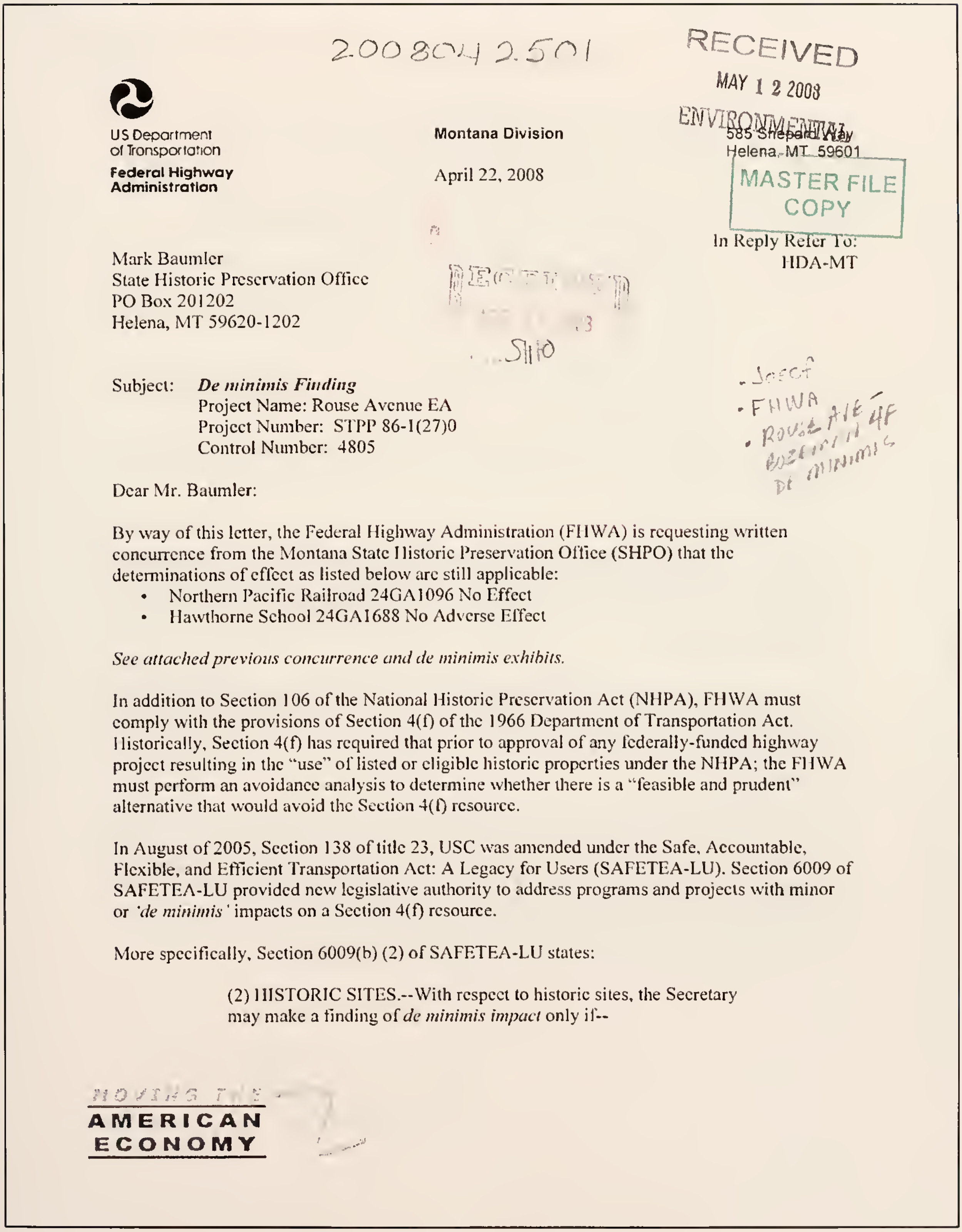

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US Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Montana Division

585 Shepard Way
Helena, MT 59601

April 22, 2008

In Reply Refer To:
HDA-MT

RECEIVED
3
SHPO

Mark Baumler
State Historic Preservation Office
PO Box 201202
Helena, MT 59620-1202

- Jscof
- FHWA
- Rouse Ave 4F Bozeman De minimis

Subject: ***De minimis Finding***
Project Name: Rouse Avenue EA
Project Number: STPP 86-1(27)0
Control Number: 4805

Dear Mr. Baumler:

By way of this letter, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is requesting written concurrence from the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) that the determinations of effect as listed below are still applicable:

- Northern Pacific Railroad 24GA1096 No Effect
- Hawthorne School 24GA1688 No Adverse Effect

See attached previous concurrence and de minimis exhibits.

In addition to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), FHWA must comply with the provisions of Section 4(f) of the 1966 Department of Transportation Act. Historically, Section 4(f) has required that prior to approval of any federally-funded highway project resulting in the "use" of listed or eligible historic properties under the NHPA; the FHWA must perform an avoidance analysis to determine whether there is a "feasible and prudent" alternative that would avoid the Section 4(f) resource.

In August of 2005, Section 138 of title 23, USC was amended under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Section 6009 of SAFETEA-LU provided new legislative authority to address programs and projects with minor or '*de minimis*' impacts on a Section 4(f) resource.

More specifically, Section 6009(b) (2) of SAFETEA-LU states:

> (2) HISTORIC SITES.--With respect to historic sites, the Secretary may make a finding of *de minimis impact* only if--

MOVING THE
AMERICAN
ECONOMY

> (A) the Secretary has determined, in accordance with the consultation process required under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), that--
>
> (i) the transportation program or project will have no adverse effect on the historic site; or
>
> (ii) there will be no historic properties affected by the transportation program or project;
>
> (B) the finding of the Secretary has received written concurrence from the applicable State historic preservation officer or tribal historic preservation officer (and from the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation if the Council is participating in the consultation process); and
>
> (C) the finding of the Secretary has been developed in consultation with parties consulting as part of the process referred to in subparagraph (A).

This new provision of Section 4(f) is the basis of this letter, and of the FHWA's determination of *de minimis* impacts.

***De Minimis* Determination**

The findings of "no effect and no adverse effect" reflect a conclusion that the uses identified in the attached exhibits will not "alter, directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics of [the] historic property that qualify the property for inclusion in the National Register in a manner that would diminish the integrity of the property's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association."

If you concur in the "no effect and no adverse effect" determination, FHWA intends to make a finding that impacts to historic resources that would result from implementation of the subject project would be *de minimis* for purposes of Section 4(f), as recently amended by Congress.

Request for Concurrence

The FHWA requests the written concurrence of the Montana SHPO that the above-described finding of "no effect and no adverse effect" on historic resources from the subject project are still applicable. This written concurrence will be evidence that the concurrence and consultation requirements of Section 6009 of SAFETEA-LU, as they will be codified at 23 U.S.C. § 138(b) (2) (B) & (C), and 49 U.S.C. § 303 (d) (2) (B) and (C) are satisfied. Concurrence can be provided either by signing and dating this letter or by separate letter from the Montana SHPO to the Federal Highway Administration, 585 Shepard Way, Helena, MT 59601.

Sincerely,

Kevin L. McLaury, P.E.
Division Administrator

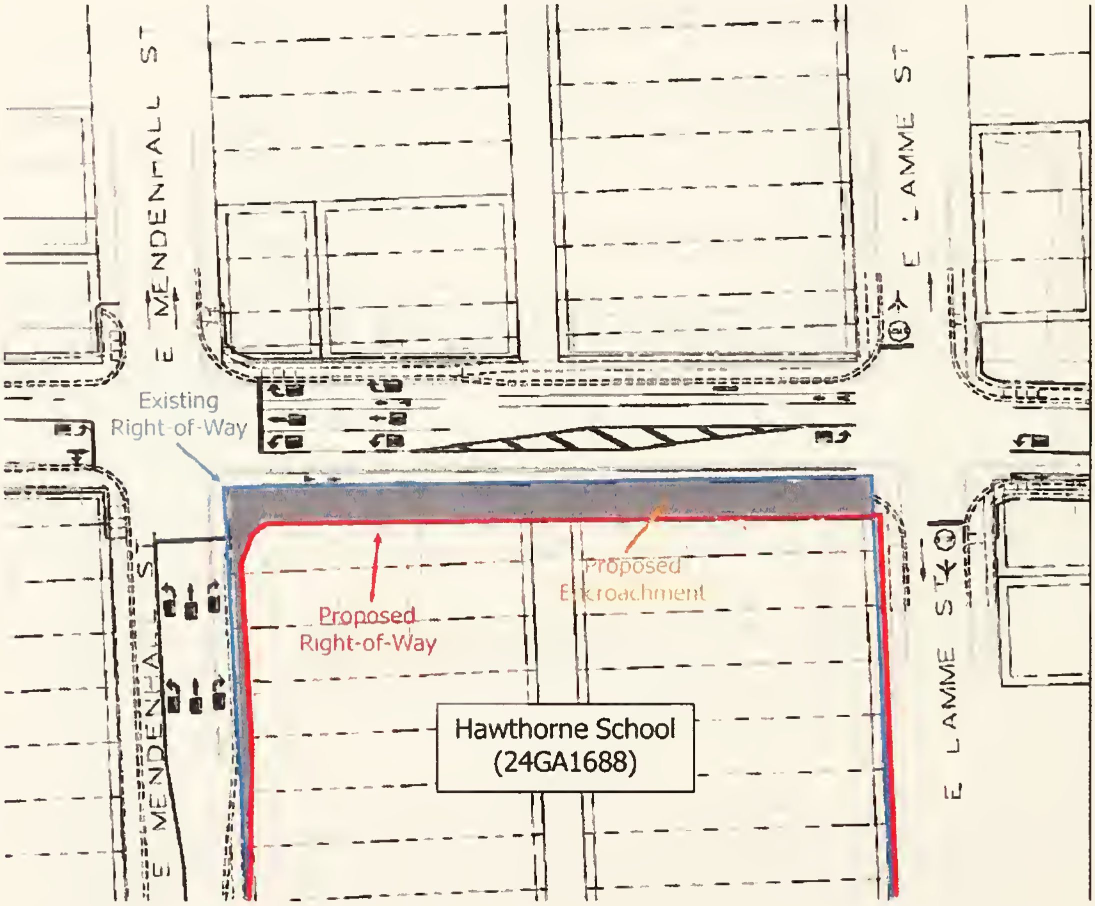
Attachments

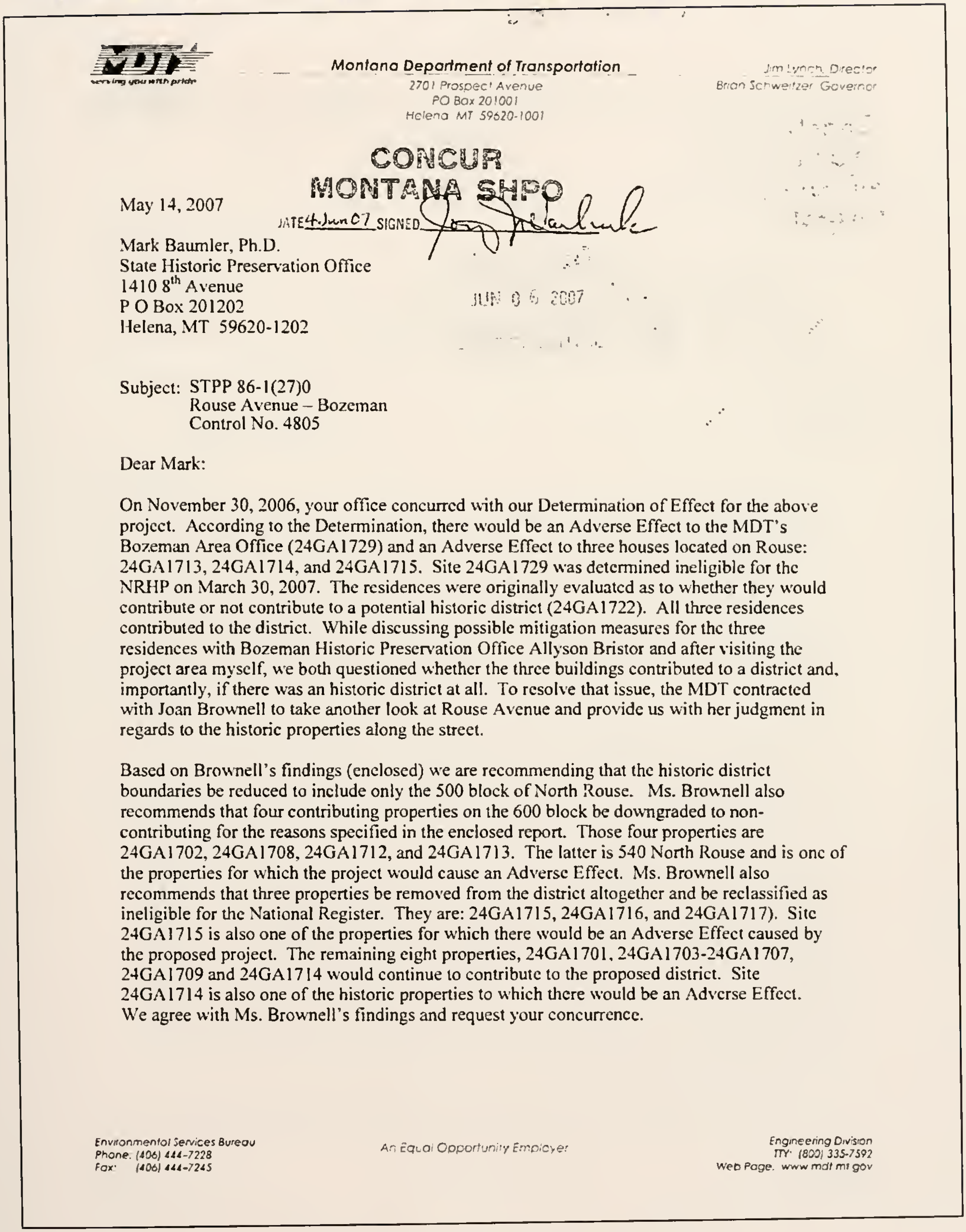
cc: Jeff Patten, FHWA, Operations Engineer
Carl James, FHWA, Transportation Specialist

File: STPP 86-1(27)0 jp/lw

**CONCUR
MONTANA SHPO:**

DATE 6 May 08 SIGNED


E MENDENHALL ST
E LAMME ST
Existing Right-of-Way
Proposed Right-of-Way
Proposed Encroachment
Hawthorne School (24GA1688)
E MENDENHALL ST
E LAMME ST



MDT serving you with pride
Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena MT 59620-1001
Jim Lynch, Director
Brian Schweitzer, Governor

CONCUR
MONTANA SHPO
DATE 4-Jun-07 SIGNED

May 14, 2007

JUN 0 6 2007

Mark Baumler, Ph.D.
State Historic Preservation Office
1410 8th Avenue
P O Box 201202
Helena, MT 59620-1202

Subject: STPP 86-1(27)0
Rouse Avenue – Bozeman
Control No. 4805

Dear Mark:

On November 30, 2006, your office concurred with our Determination of Effect for the above project. According to the Determination, there would be an Adverse Effect to the MDT's Bozeman Area Office (24GA1729) and an Adverse Effect to three houses located on Rouse: 24GA1713, 24GA1714, and 24GA1715. Site 24GA1729 was determined ineligible for the NRHP on March 30, 2007. The residences were originally evaluated as to whether they would contribute or not contribute to a potential historic district (24GA1722). All three residences contributed to the district. While discussing possible mitigation measures for the three residences with Bozeman Historic Preservation Office Allyson Bristor and after visiting the project area myself, we both questioned whether the three buildings contributed to a district and, importantly, if there was an historic district at all. To resolve that issue, the MDT contracted with Joan Brownell to take another look at Rouse Avenue and provide us with her judgment in regards to the historic properties along the street.

Based on Brownell's findings (enclosed) we are recommending that the historic district boundaries be reduced to include only the 500 block of North Rouse. Ms. Brownell also recommends that four contributing properties on the 600 block be downgraded to non-contributing for the reasons specified in the enclosed report. Those four properties are 24GA1702, 24GA1708, 24GA1712, and 24GA1713. The latter is 540 North Rouse and is one of the properties for which the project would cause an Adverse Effect. Ms. Brownell also recommends that three properties be removed from the district altogether and be reclassified as ineligible for the National Register. They are: 24GA1715, 24GA1716, and 24GA1717). Site 24GA1715 is also one of the properties for which there would be an Adverse Effect caused by the proposed project. The remaining eight properties, 24GA1701, 24GA1703-24GA1707, 24GA1709 and 24GA1714 would continue to contribute to the proposed district. Site 24GA1714 is also one of the historic properties to which there would be an Adverse Effect. We agree with Ms. Brownell's findings and request your concurrence.

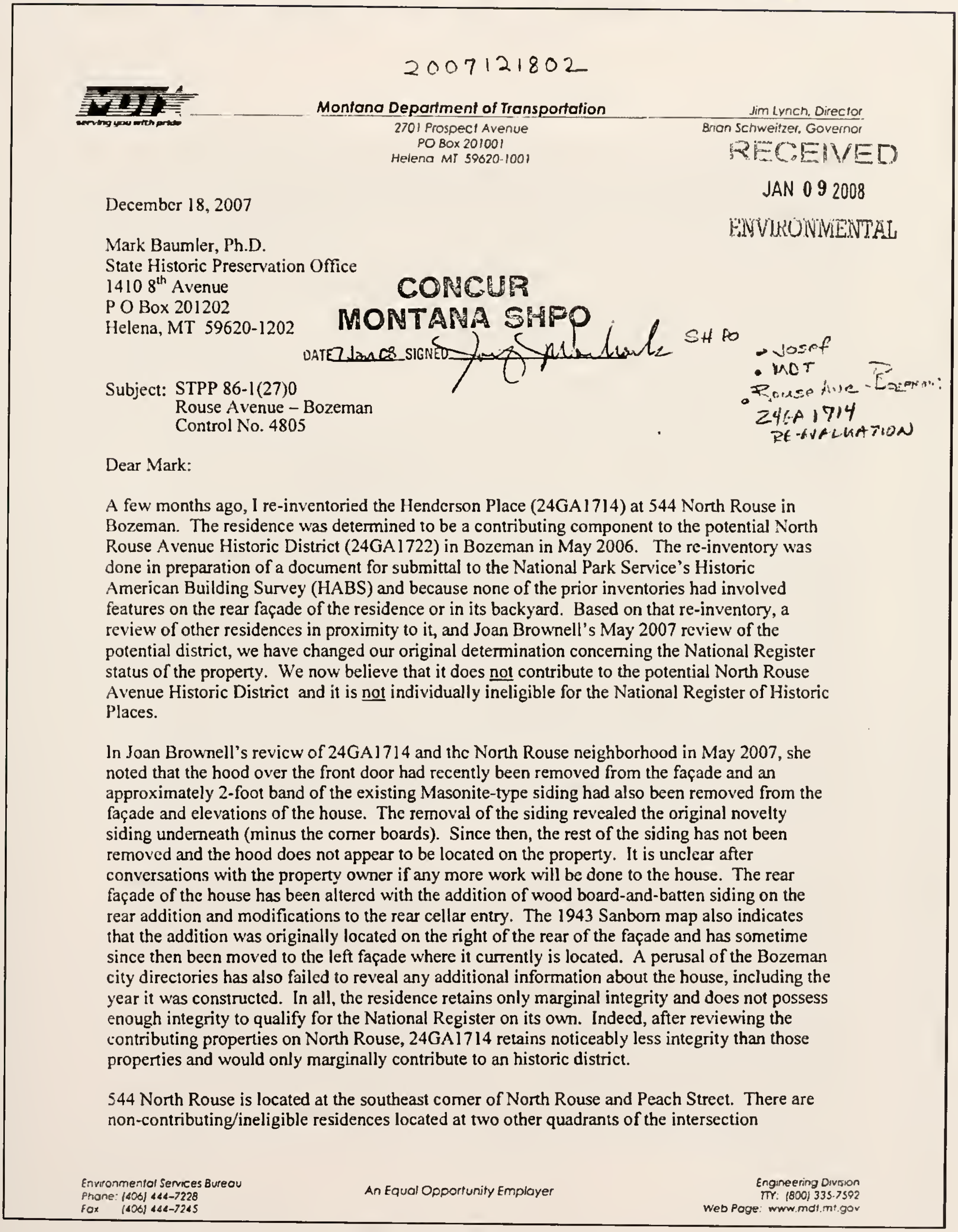
If you have any questions, please contact me at 444-6258.

Jon Axline

Jon Axline, Historian
Environmental Services

Enclosure

cc: Jeff Ebert, P.E., Butte District Administrator
Tom Martin, P.E., Consultant Design
Bonnie Steg, Resources Section
Allyson Bristor, Bozeman HPO w/attachment



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Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena MT 59620-1001

Jim Lynch, Director
Brian Schweitzer, Governor

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December 18, 2007

Mark Baumler, Ph.D.
State Historic Preservation Office
1410 8th Avenue
P O Box 201202
Helena, MT 59620-1202

CONCUR
MONTANA SHPO
DATE 7 Jan 08 SIGNED SHPO

- Josef
- MDT
- Rouse Ave - Bozeman
24GA 1714
RE-EVALUATION

Subject: STPP 86-1(27)0
Rouse Avenue – Bozeman
Control No. 4805

Dear Mark:

A few months ago, I re-inventoried the Henderson Place (24GA1714) at 544 North Rouse in Bozeman. The residence was determined to be a contributing component to the potential North Rouse Avenue Historic District (24GA1722) in Bozeman in May 2006. The re-inventory was done in preparation of a document for submittal to the National Park Service's Historic American Building Survey (HABS) and because none of the prior inventories had involved features on the rear façade of the residence or in its backyard. Based on that re-inventory, a review of other residences in proximity to it, and Joan Brownell's May 2007 review of the potential district, we have changed our original determination concerning the National Register status of the property. We now believe that it does not contribute to the potential North Rouse Avenue Historic District and it is not individually ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

In Joan Brownell's review of 24GA1714 and the North Rouse neighborhood in May 2007, she noted that the hood over the front door had recently been removed from the façade and an approximately 2-foot band of the existing Masonite-type siding had also been removed from the façade and elevations of the house. The removal of the siding revealed the original novelty siding underneath (minus the corner boards). Since then, the rest of the siding has not been removed and the hood does not appear to be located on the property. It is unclear after conversations with the property owner if any more work will be done to the house. The rear façade of the house has been altered with the addition of wood board-and-batten siding on the rear addition and modifications to the rear cellar entry. The 1943 Sanborn map also indicates that the addition was originally located on the right of the rear of the façade and has sometime since then been moved to the left façade where it currently is located. A perusal of the Bozeman city directories has also failed to reveal any additional information about the house, including the year it was constructed. In all, the residence retains only marginal integrity and does not possess enough integrity to qualify for the National Register on its own. Indeed, after reviewing the contributing properties on North Rouse, 24GA1714 retains noticeably less integrity than those properties and would only marginally contribute to an historic district.

544 North Rouse is located at the southeast corner of North Rouse and Peach Street. There are non-contributing/ineligible residences located at two other quadrants of the intersection

Environmental Services Bureau
Phone: (406) 444-7228
Fax (406) 444-7245

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Engineering Division
TTY: (800) 335-7592
Web Page: www.mdt.mt.gov

(northwest and southwest). A modern convenience store is located directly across the street from the residence on the northeast corner of the intersection. A modern apartment complex is located behind the house to the east and the house immediately adjacent to 544 North Rouse (24GA1714) is ineligible for the National Register and would not contribute to the potential historic district. The 500 block of North Rouse is approximately 1,500-feet in length (the average city block in Bozeman is 600-feet in length) and contains seventeen residences, seven (24GA1701, 24GA1703-24GA1707) of which would contribute to the potential district (none are individually eligible for the NRHP). Those residences are concentrated on the west side of the road on the south end of the block with one located directly across from 24GA1707 on the east side of North Rouse. 544 North Rouse is located on east side at the north end of the block. It is surrounded by properties that do no contribute to the potential historic district and are individually ineligible for the Register. There is no physical or visual connection between the residence and those properties that would contribute to an historic district. If the potential historic district boundaries were extended to include the property, there would be eight contributing properties and nine non-contributing properties in the potential North Rouse Street Historic District. The eighth property, 544 North Rouse, would be isolated at the end of the block, separated from the other properties by seven non-contributing residences.

It is our contention that the house cannot contribute to the historic district as it would be discontiguous to the potential district. National Register Bulletin #16A in "Guidelines for Selecting Boundaries" (pp. 56-57) states that persons should "Select boundaries to encompass the single area of land containing the significant concentration of buildings, sites, structures, or objects making up the district. The district's significance and historic integrity should help to determine the boundaries." Further, if there have been visual changes "in the character of the area due to different architectural styles, types or periods, or to a decline in the *concentration of contributing resources*" then the property would not contribute to the district. Site 24GA1714 is not contiguous to the potential district's boundaries. The seven properties that would contribute to the historic district are located contiguous to each other and meet the guidelines for a significant physical and visual concentration of buildings that would contribute to an historic district. There is no visual continuity between the potential district boundaries and 544 North Rouse. There is a significant gap consisting of non-contributing resources between those that contribute and 544 North Rouse. National Register Bulleting #15 (page 6) states that it is "not appropriate to use the discontiguous district format to include an isolated resource . . . which [was] once connected to the district.

If the potential historic district boundaries were drawn around the south end of the 500 block of North Rouse, it would include seven contributing properties and two non-contributing buildings. The district would be a recognizable entity and clearly retain integrity. The guidelines established by the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places in Bulletin #15 would then be met and the presence of a strong, easily recognized historic district established.

Based on my review of the project area, the adjacent streets, and the National Register guidelines, 544 North Rouse is not contiguous to the potential historic district and could not, therefore, contribute to the potential North Rouse Avenue Historic District. Inclusion of the residence in the potential historic district would result in 544 North Rouse being isolated from the row of contributing building at the end of the block, surrounded by non-contributing components. The ratio between contributing and non-contributing components be balanced in favor of the non-contributing buildings with more than half of the buildings not contributing the district. The residence at 544 North Rouse moreover, does not retain enough integrity or historic significance to qualify as an individually eligible historic property. We have concluded, therefore, that 544 North Rouse (24GA1714) does not contribute to the proposed North Rouse Avenue Historic District (24GA1722) and is not individually eligible for the National Register. We request your concurrence.

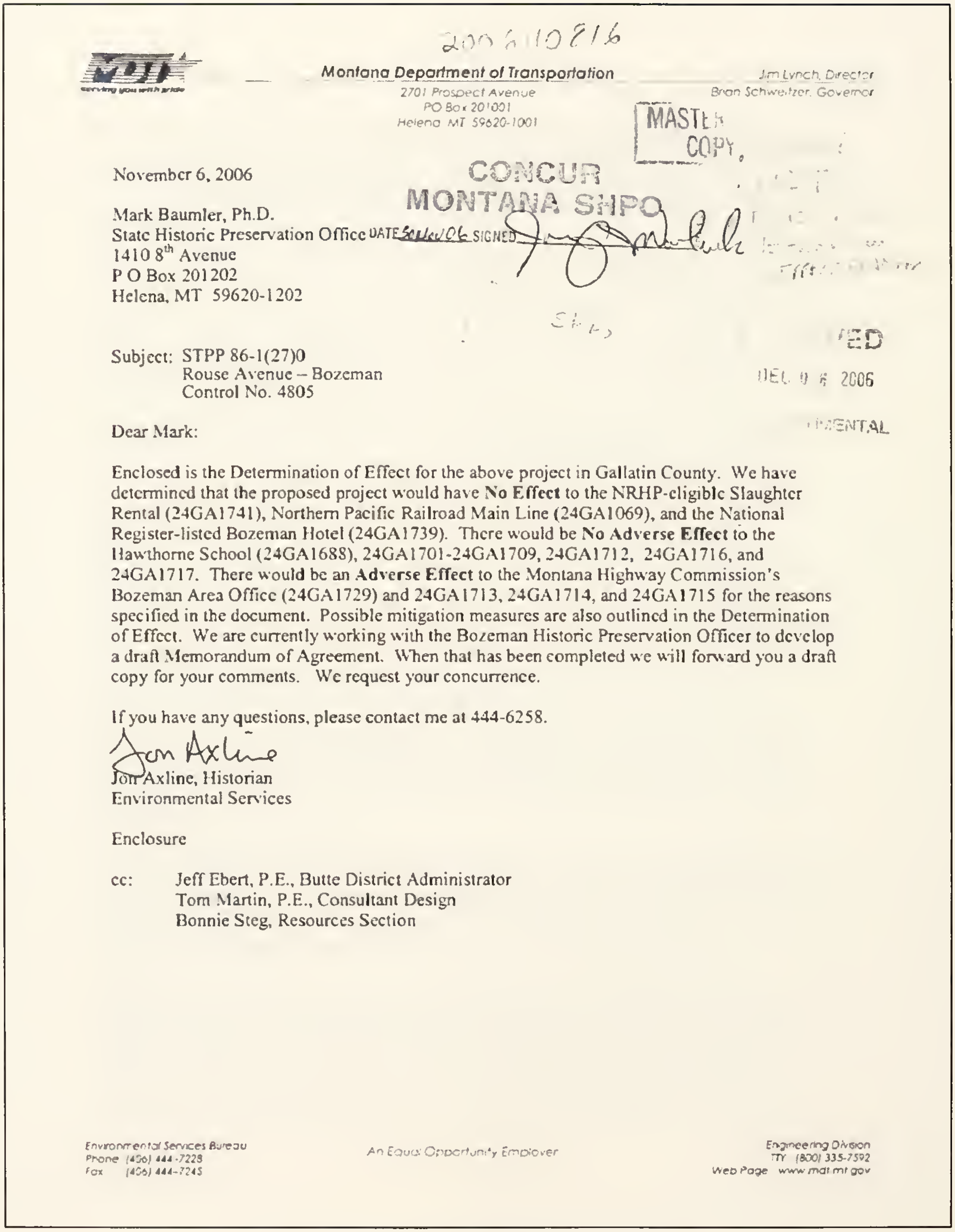
If you have any questions, please contact me at 444-6258.

Jon Axline

Jon Axline, Historian
Environmental Services

Attachment

cc: Jeff Ebert, P.E., Butte District Administrator
Tim Conway, P.E., Consultant Design
Bonnie Steg, Resources Section
Allyson Bristor, Bozeman Historic Preservation Office



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Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena MT 59620-1001

Jim Lynch, Director
Brian Schweitzer, Governor

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CONCUR
MONTANA SHPO
DATE 30Nov06 SIGNED

'ED
DEC 0 6 2006
MENTAL

November 6, 2006

Mark Baumler, Ph.D.
State Historic Preservation Office
1410 8th Avenue
P O Box 201202
Helena, MT 59620-1202

Subject: STPP 86-1(27)0
Rouse Avenue – Bozeman
Control No. 4805

Dear Mark:

Enclosed is the Determination of Effect for the above project in Gallatin County. We have determined that the proposed project would have **No Effect** to the NRHP-eligible Slaughter Rental (24GA1741), Northern Pacific Railroad Main Line (24GA1069), and the National Register-listed Bozeman Hotel (24GA1739). There would be **No Adverse Effect** to the Hawthorne School (24GA1688), 24GA1701-24GA1709, 24GA1712, 24GA1716, and 24GA1717. There would be an **Adverse Effect** to the Montana Highway Commission's Bozeman Area Office (24GA1729) and 24GA1713, 24GA1714, and 24GA1715 for the reasons specified in the document. Possible mitigation measures are also outlined in the Determination of Effect. We are currently working with the Bozeman Historic Preservation Officer to develop a draft Memorandum of Agreement. When that has been completed we will forward you a draft copy for your comments. We request your concurrence.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 444-6258.

Jon Axline

Jon Axline, Historian
Environmental Services

Enclosure

cc: Jeff Ebert, P.E., Butte District Administrator
Tom Martin, P.E., Consultant Design
Bonnie Steg, Resources Section

Environmental Services Bureau
Phone (406) 444-7228
Fax (406) 444-7245

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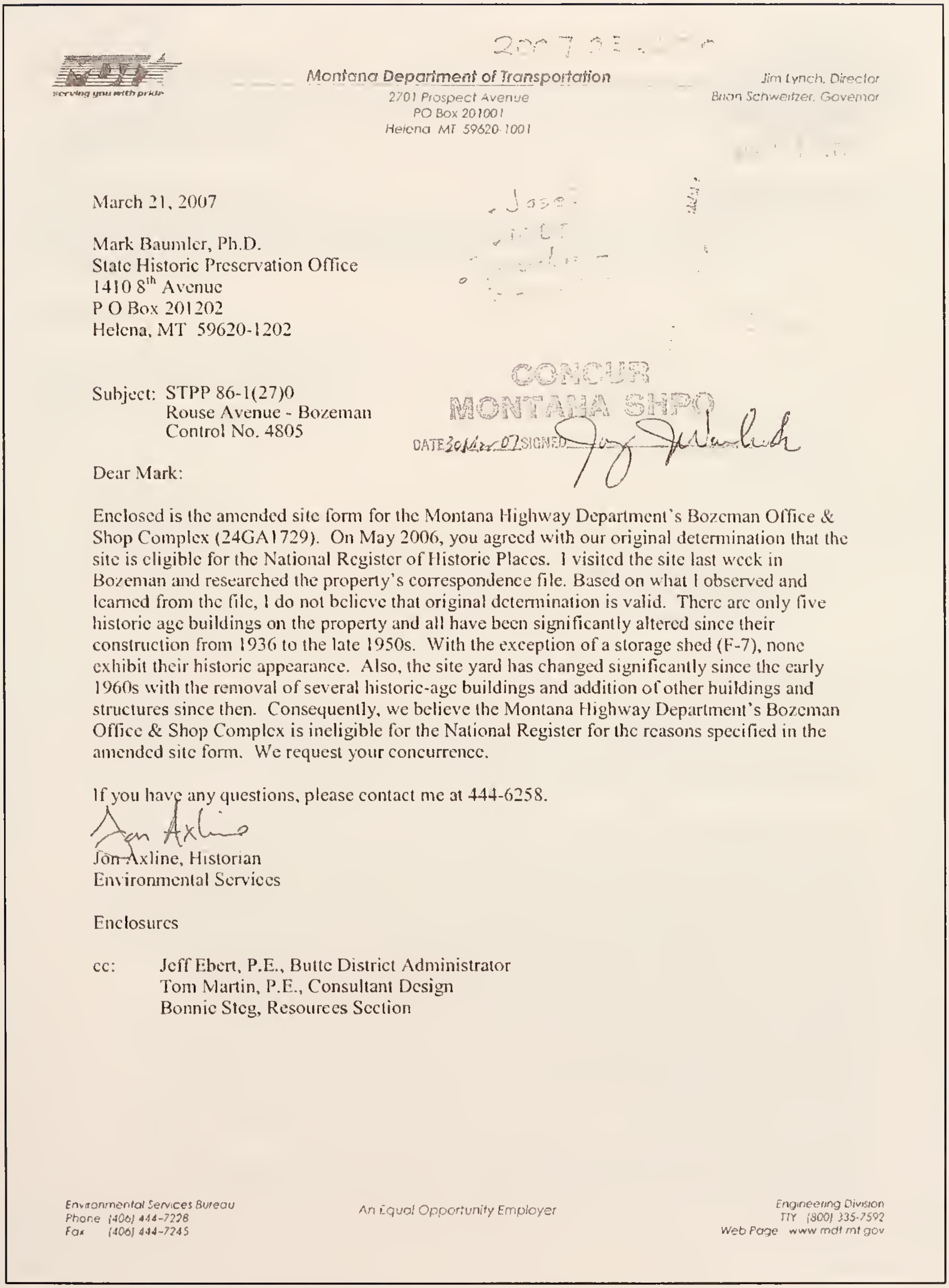

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Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena MT 59620-1001

Jim Lynch, Director
Brian Schweitzer, Governor

March 21, 2007

Mark Baumler, Ph.D.
State Historic Preservation Office
1410 8th Avenue
P O Box 201202
Helena, MT 59620-1202

Subject: STPP 86-1(27)0
Rouse Avenue - Bozeman
Control No. 4805

CONCUR
MONTANA SHPO
DATE 30 Mar 07 SIGNED

Dear Mark:

Enclosed is the amended site form for the Montana Highway Department's Bozeman Office & Shop Complex (24GA1729). On May 2006, you agreed with our original determination that the site is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. I visited the site last week in Bozeman and researched the property's correspondence file. Based on what I observed and learned from the file, I do not believe that original determination is valid. There are only five historic age buildings on the property and all have been significantly altered since their construction from 1936 to the late 1950s. With the exception of a storage shed (F-7), none exhibit their historic appearance. Also, the site yard has changed significantly since the early 1960s with the removal of several historic-age buildings and addition of other buildings and structures since then. Consequently, we believe the Montana Highway Department's Bozeman Office & Shop Complex is ineligible for the National Register for the reasons specified in the amended site form. We request your concurrence.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 444-6258.

Jon Axline

Jon Axline, Historian
Environmental Services

Enclosures

cc: Jeff Ebert, P.E., Butte District Administrator
Tom Martin, P.E., Consultant Design
Bonnie Steg, Resources Section

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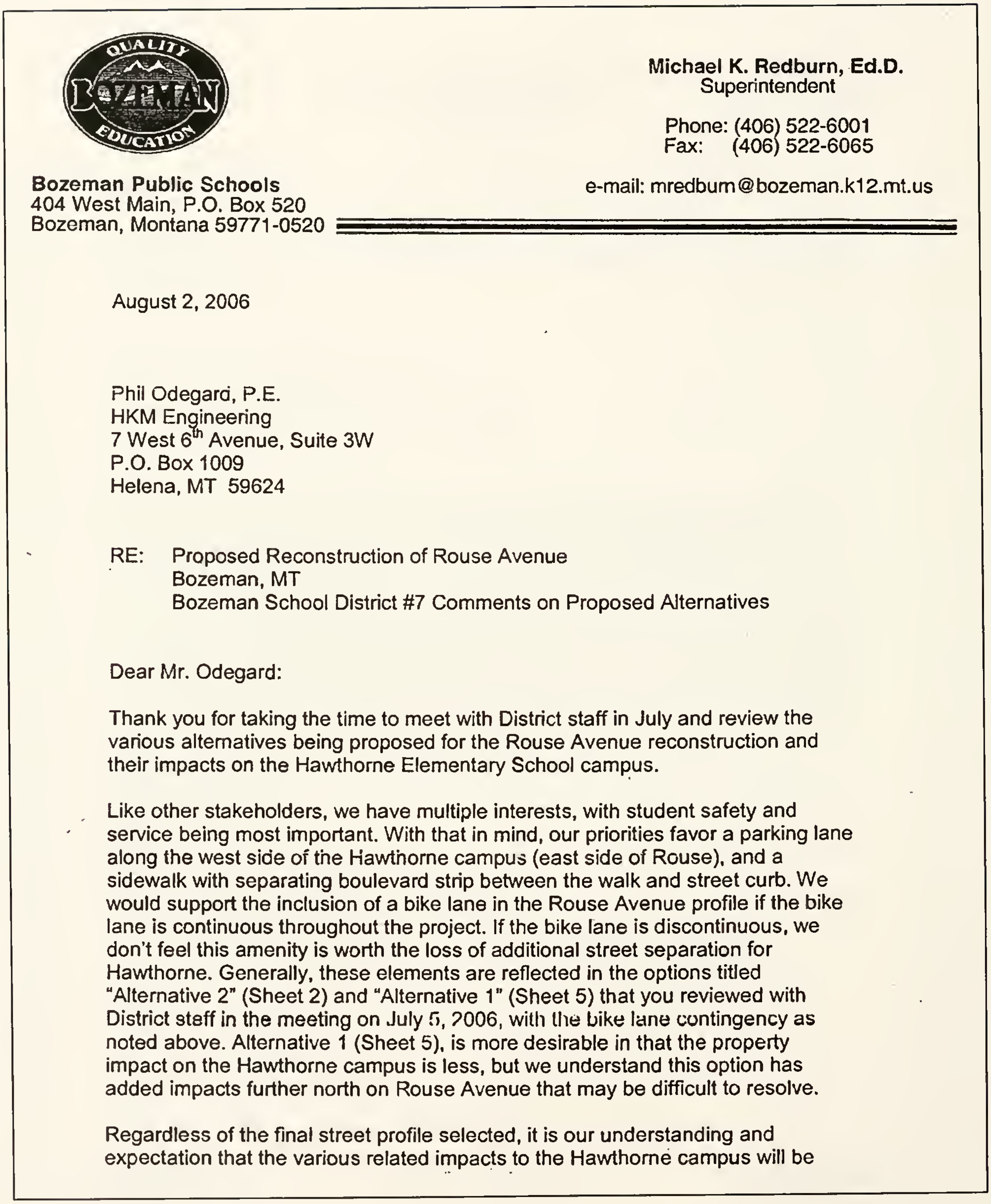

Bozeman Public Schools
404 West Main, P.O. Box 520
Bozeman, Montana 59771-0520

Michael K. Redburn, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Phone: (406) 522-6001
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e-mail: mredbum@bozeman.k12.mt.us

August 2, 2006

Phil Odegard, P.E.
HKM Engineering
7 West 6th Avenue, Suite 3W
P.O. Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624

RE: Proposed Reconstruction of Rouse Avenue
Bozeman, MT
Bozeman School District #7 Comments on Proposed Alternatives

Dear Mr. Odegard:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with District staff in July and review the various alternatives being proposed for the Rouse Avenue reconstruction and their impacts on the Hawthorne Elementary School campus.

Like other stakeholders, we have multiple interests, with student safety and service being most important. With that in mind, our priorities favor a parking lane along the west side of the Hawthorne campus (east side of Rouse), and a sidewalk with separating boulevard strip between the walk and street curb. We would support the inclusion of a bike lane in the Rouse Avenue profile if the bike lane is continuous throughout the project. If the bike lane is discontinuous, we don't feel this amenity is worth the loss of additional street separation for Hawthorne. Generally, these elements are reflected in the options titled "Alternative 2" (Sheet 2) and "Alternative 1" (Sheet 5) that you reviewed with District staff in the meeting on July 5, 2006, with the bike lane contingency as noted above. Alternative 1 (Sheet 5), is more desirable in that the property impact on the Hawthorne campus is less, but we understand this option has added impacts further north on Rouse Avenue that may be difficult to resolve.

Regardless of the final street profile selected, it is our understanding and expectation that the various related impacts to the Hawthorne campus will be addressed and resolved. These would include relocation/reconstruction of the Hawthorne sign, relocation and/or replacement of various trees, grade adjustments relative to sidewalks and landscape elements, and compensation for property loss.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and the District looks forward to continued involvement with this project as it progresses. *If you have any questions about our position please contact or reply to Ed Sondeno at 522-6009.*

Sincerely,

Michael Redburn, Superintendent

cc Board Members
Steve Johnson
Robin Miller
Ed Sondeno

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ROUSE AVENUE - BOZEMAN

STPP 86-1(27)0
CN 4805

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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